

100<sup>th</sup> ASG  
Army Family Action Plan  
Conference 2003



Amberg Congress Center  
11-13 March 2003  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck,  
Germany



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MEMORNADUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: 2003 Army Family Action Plan (AFAP)

1. During 11-13 March 2003 the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG held its Army Family Action Plan Conference at the Amberg Congress Center. Over 150 participants representing active duty soldiers, reservists, family members, retirees, teens and community agencies attended this "Army Community" gathering. The purpose of the conference was to review issues and concerns that were submitted by the communities in the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG. The work groups then recommended possible solutions to improve the quality of life within the community, USAREUR and the United States Army.

2. Concerns were reviewed and discussed using small work group problem solving techniques led by facilitators. The groups were divided into six categories:

- a. Family Support
  - 1. ACS
  - 2. FRG/Rear Detachment
  - 3. Single Parent Support Groups
  - 4. Family Assistance Centers
  - 5. Chaplain/Chapels
  - 6. Installation Volunteer Coordinator
  - 7. Spouse Education
- b. Force Support and Entitlements
  - 1. American Red Cross
  - 2. MP Support
  - 3. Education Center
  - 4. Military Clothing and Sales
  - 5. BOSS Program
  - 6. AG Office
  - 7. DPTMS
- c. Medical and Dental
  - 1. Dental Clinics
  - 2. Military Treatment Facilities/Health Clinics/TRICARE
  - 3. Exceptional Family Member & Family Advocacy Programs
  - 4. Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Programs

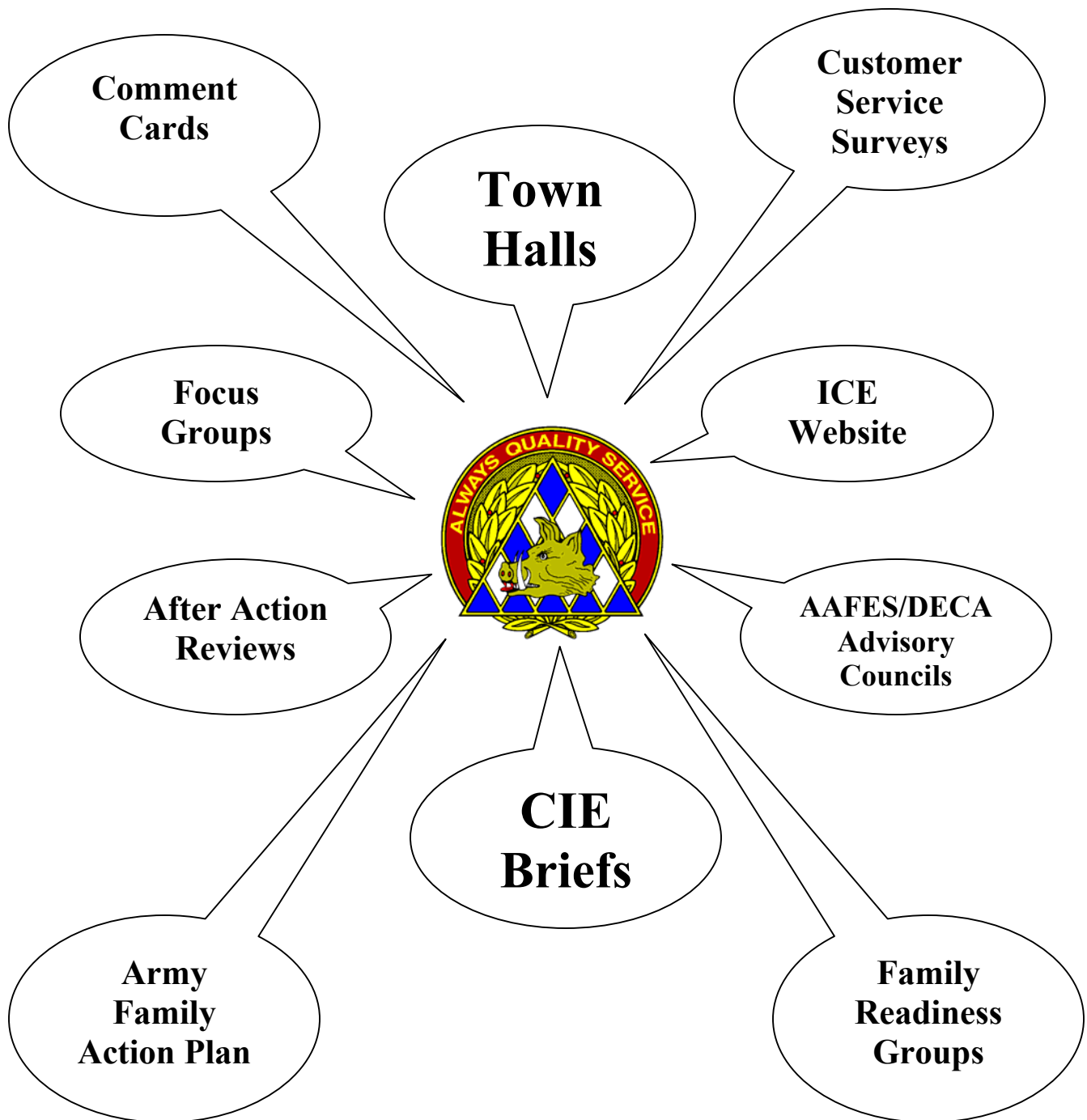
5. Suicide Prevention
  6. Community Counseling Center
  7. Social Work Services
  8. Vet Clinic
- d. Housing, Relocation and Employment
1. Housing
  2. BOQ/BEQ/Billets
  3. Work Orders/Self Help
  4. Civilian Personnel Office
  5. Relocation & Sponsorship Programs
  6. Employment & Financial Readiness Programs
  7. Vehicle Registration/Inspection
  8. Quartermaster
  9. Dining Facilities
  10. In-Out Processing
  11. In-Out Transportation
  12. Community Shuttle Bus/TMP
  13. DETMO (School Busing System)
- e. Child and Youth
1. Child Development Center
  2. Schools (Middle/High School, Elementary Schools in 100<sup>th</sup> ASG)
  3. School Age Services
  4. Child Development Services
  5. Adolescent Substance Abuse Counseling
  6. Club Beyond
  7. Girl and Boy Scouts
  8. Family Child Care Providers
  9. DETMO (School Busing System)
  10. WIC Program
- f. Consumer Services
1. Commissary
  2. Bank
  3. AAFES Facilities
  4. MWR Activities
  5. Finance
  6. Transportation
  7. Legal
  8. SATO

3. After the Conference, five issues and one alternate issue was forwarded to IMA. Local issues that could be addressed in the 100th ASG are listed within this AFAP Issue Update Book along with responses from the appropriate Directorate. Individuals within all three communities in the 100th ASG submitted the issues. They are listed with the individual's issue, background and the individual's recommendation, and finally with the Directorate's response.

4. Many of these issues are actually ideas on how to improve quality of life within the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG. As you read them, you will notice many could have been addressed earlier if brought to the commands attention through one of the many feedback mechanisms. Each Directorate has a representative at the 409<sup>th</sup> Town Hall held each quarter or the 282D CIE held each monthly. AAFES has "Meet the Managers" meeting and the Commissary's "Commissary Focus" groups identify community needs. DoDDS holds Installation Advisory Committee (IAC) and School Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings where concerns can be brought forward. Community members are encouraged to use one or all of these mechanisms. Doing so ensures community leaders are able to provide expedient responses to your concerns.

//original signed//  
RICHARD G. JUNG SR.  
COL, AR  
Commanding

# Examples of 100<sup>th</sup> ASG Feedback Mechanisms



100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany



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100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany

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# FAMILY SUPPORT

100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany

## **ISSUE: Lack of Lamaze Classes**

**BACKGROUND:** ACS offers some prenatal classes however there are no Lamaze. Lamaze goes through each step of pregnancy and actual labor. It also gives classes to practice giving birth. Videotapes watched for an hour do not cut it. The 100<sup>th</sup> ASG has many, many new mothers. Lamaze is needed to teach technique and what is truly expected. This cannot be properly taught in one or two hours. Again, breathing techniques, etc. need to be learned. They cannot be learned by watching older birthing videos where the mother to be pants twice and magically – here's the baby! When I went through the ACS class there was a video we watched and then the instructor said she would pinch us on the wrist to imitate a labor pain! If we can't get valid help here on post what are we to do (Especially with the language barrier at the hospital and with the German staff)?

**RECOMMENDATION:** Hire a Lamaze coach for each BSB or at the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG level to provide monthly or bi-monthly classes. This is a much-needed service to increase the quality of life for expectant mothers and fathers.

**RESOLUTION:** We can offer Healthy Pregnancy Healthy Baby classes, which does teach some breathing techniques, the problem at the present time is getting the course material. As of June 2001, National Headquarters discontinued this course and the Red Cross chapter San Diego California bought all course material. We are now ordering the course material thru the chapter in San Diego. We understand and realize the importance of this course and will do everything possible.

**ISSUE: Renegotiate SOFA so spouses clubs don't need the word "spouse" in them.**

**BACKGROUND:** In the past, all clubs have had to have the name "spouse" in them to be tax exempt. With the new Army and new ideas, the clubs have gotten away from the division of men and women in the clubs. The names have started using "community" rather than "spouse". Now that many of the names have changed to include everyone, we have to change the names back due to the wording of SOFA. We are afraid that changing back to a spouse club will alienate the soldiers and civilians that belong. Community seems to fit the current needs better.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Change the SOFA to say community and/or spouse clubs so that either will maintain tax exemption.

**RESOLUTION: None. Changing the SOFA is not a viable option. The NATO SOFA has never been changed since it was originally signed in 1951. The NATO SOFA Supplementary Agreement, which provides the basis for spouses' clubs obtaining benefits under Art. 71 took effect in 1963. It was amended in 1971, 1981, and most recently in 1993. This wouldn't solve the problem, either.**

**The crux of your specific problem is the Exchange of Notes Verbale from 7 July 1993. The grant of status for the spouses' clubs pursuant to Article 71 of the NATO SOFA SA as a non-German non-commercial organization refers to them as "spouses" clubs. Changing the name would be problematic, as the nature of the organization as a spouses' morale support effort to aid the units of their spouses was part of the basis for the grant of status. I would not attempt to wake this sleeping dog, as any attempt to modify or amend the present exchange of Notes Verbale would likely be counter-productive.**

**Mr. Paul Conderman, HQ USAREUR/7A OJA.**

**ISSUE: Fund to donate money to ACS, AFTB, NPSP, etc**

BACKGROUND: Childcare, baby basket supplies, etc are important to people volunteering for ACS and AFTB and new parents to the community. In the past, spouses clubs have been able to donate to pay for these items and there were NAF funds to pay for student and volunteer childcare. ACS has been forced to close the informal accounts that this money was held in and there is no way to donate money for these very worthy activities.

RECOMMENDATION: Allow ACS to maintain an informal account to be used for accepting donations to support volunteer childcare, AFTB student childcare, New Parent Support Program/FAP baby basket supplies, etc to allow them to better support the community.

**RESOLUTION: Forwarded to IMA level AFAP Conference, active issue**

**ISSUE: Operation Up-Link Phone Cards**

BACKGROUND: Did ACS ever receive the cards furnished by the Veteran's of Foreign Wars?

RECOMMENDATION:

**RESOLUTION: Those cards were never received**

## **ISSUE: The AFAP Process**

**BACKGROUND:** The problem is that this is a huge waste of our time, money and effort. People don't feel like their issues progress since only a limited number of them go any higher level, and it takes too long to ever hear any progress. Duplicates what is already in place at various levels (i.e. comment cards, Town Halls, hotlines, web-based feedback)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Streamline the system!! Have DA create a "quality of life" center and develop a web-based feedback system. As solutions to problems are determined, then publicize this on a web page. All the money spent at each installation level, MACOM level and DA level could be used for better and quicker results.

**RESOLUTION:** The AFAP process has been in use for over nineteen years and has been successful. Many programs, services and pieces of legislation have been either created or improved due to the AFAP process. Some include: FRGs, BOSS, the SGLI increased from \$50,000 to \$250,000 and the Thrift Savings Plan. The 100<sup>th</sup> ASG AFAP Conference is held annually. Each Conference receives over a hundred issues to be addressed at the local level. However, each issue will be addressed. After all the issues have been responded to by the appropriate agency, there are two ways to give the communities feedback. First, is an Issue Update Book that is created with all the issues and their responses from the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG and secondly, each will be printed in the Training Times. If an individual is looking for a quick response for a local level issue, it is suggested to use other appropriate forums such as: Town Halls, Community Information Exchanges, the ICE website or Comment Cards. If you would like more information about AFAP, call 476-2650 or 09662-83-2650. You can also learn more at [www.acs.org](http://www.acs.org) then click on AFAP.

**ISSUE: AFTB should be mandatory for all new soldiers and/or spouses to the Army**

**BACKGROUND:** A lot of new soldiers and their spouses do not take advantage of AFTB and miss out of the valuable information that is available.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Make it a part of the in-processing process

**RESOLUTION:** AFTB's contractor does a brief overview of the AFTB program at the in-processing center for all new soldiers to the Vilseck and Grafenwoehr area. Other AFTB training can be set up through the FRG groups and we have taught classes to both soldier and spouses on several occasions. By calling the AFTB office anyone can arrange classes. The AFTB number is 476-2797 or 09662-83-2797.

**ISSUE: Officer and Enlisted wives clubs are discriminatory!**

BACKGROUND: Ever since we've been in the military life, I have heard of organizations advertising, "Come join, we use no rank". I have enjoyed my stay in Vilseck because there is a community club. I don't feel discriminated upon because of my husband's rank. I am a very active community member and have participated largely in the VCC; however, we are soon PCSing to FT. Riley, Ks. We have been stationed there before but I was not allowed to "volunteer" with their bazaar and other functions because I was not an officer's spouse. I want to volunteer in certain aspects of the community but cannot because my husband is enlisted. The enlisted wives clubs in FT. Riley and other communities are almost non-existent due to lack of participation. That is why I think VCC is a great organization. Yes, most of the members are officer's wives, however, it gives those enlisted wives the opportunity to participate if they choose to.

RECOMMENDATION: Change officer and enlisted wives clubs to community clubs. Times are changing and so should this system!

**RESOLUTION: "Installation commanders are responsible for ensuring that an organization taking advantage of or using on-post facilities does not engage in unlawful Discriminatory practices" (AR 600-20). Since this issue presented concerns about Ft. Riley, it would have to be referred to that installation commander for a resolution.**



# **FORCE SUPPORT AND ENTITLEMENTS**

100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany



## **ISSUE: Inability to sign-in visitors at Gate One**

**BACKGROUND:** Gate one is the closest access gate to many housing residents and soldiers in the barracks in Graf. It is very inconvenient for us to go out to gate three just to sign in a guest (five families within three buildings of me us the same German cleaning lady) and rather than the easy walk to gate one, we have to load up small children and drive to gate three to meet her.

**RECOMMENDATION:** There are always two guards posted at this gate, and from 1100 to 1600 the only I.D.s they have to check are pedestrians. It seems that they could easily maintain a visitor sign-in book, perhaps with blue passes that specifically require return to the same gate to avoid confusion with visitors signed in at gate three. When I asked the guards why they didn't sign-in visitors the response was "we don't have the papers". It seems like this could easily be rectified.

**RESOLUTION: On post residents desiring to use cleaning services from private individuals must request unaccompanied installation access for the service provider. Once unaccompanied access is granted, the service provider will be able to proceed through any Access Control Point to perform the service. Unaccompanied access will eliminate the sign-in requirements for your service providers. In order to provide unaccompanied access to personal service providers, the requirements of Army in Europe Regulation 190-16 must be met.**

**There are two simple things that on post residents can do to expedite the process of obtaining unaccompanied installation access for personal service providers:**

- **Instruct the intended service provider to obtain a German Police Good Conduct Certificate (Polizeiliches Fuehrungszeugnis) from their local town hall. The Police Good Conduct Certificate can take up to 4 weeks.**

- **Contact the 409<sup>th</sup> BSB IACS sponsoring official immediately upon contemplating to hire a Personal Service Provider. The 409<sup>th</sup> BSB sponsoring official is Frank Melendez at 476-2802. The sponsoring official will guide you through the remaining security requirements of obtaining unaccompanied access for personnel service providers. The sponsoring official will also assist you in placing your service provider on the 409<sup>th</sup> BSB unaccompanied access roster until all security checks are completed.**

## **ISSUE: Reserve and Active Duty Primary Leadership Development Course**

**BACKGROUND:** Students call cadence outside single soldiers barracks although it is prohibited. They also violate the hours of cadence calling. It appears that there is no concern for the single soldier even in 2002. If it were family housing the entire community would be in a fury.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The current policy should be distributed to all applied. Cadre should enforce that policy. Coordination with the affected 7A/NCOA CSM and 1SGs' of single soldiers should be made to ensure compliance.

**RESOLUTION:** In the Academy's Student Staff Policy letter #3, it says Cadence calling is prohibited in the vicinity of on post family housing or the single soldiers quarters. However, C. Co. building is only about 150 meters from the soldier's barracks and it isn't realistic to move a building just because we have motivated soldiers.

**ISSUE: No trashcans in the Hohenfels Ed Center classrooms and lack of safety on steps outside of the building.**

**BACKGROUND:** I attended class in Hohenfels and was aghast at the fact that students are expected to take their trash home with them to throw away. This I found appalling. Not only did the facilities not have trashcans, but also it did have what I consider a lawsuit waiting to happen. The steps leading to the front door had at least six inches of snow on them, which eventually was packed down into a very slick surface, perfect for slipping on. Being proactive could save the military thousands of dollars in the long run. A shovel is what, \$10 and the upper body strength of soldiers pulling extra duty is free.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Find some monies to buy trashcans or recycling bins for the classroom buildings. Also find someone to shovel off snowy steps, even on weekends. Soldiers of a German cleaning company might work.

**RESOLUTION:** We are sorry for any inconvenience not having a trashcan in the room may have caused you. Being in Germany where you cannot simply throw trash away, you must recycle it, has caused us to have to remove trashcans from the room. We tried placing recycle bins in the buildings, unfortunately the wrong items was being placed in the bins and we were having to sort through the bags before taking them to the recycle center. Due to this we make it the obligation of the organization using the room to dispose of garbage. They can chose not to allow trashcans or recycle bins in the room, or they can have them and discard the items once the class is over.

We value our community members and are very grateful you did not hurt yourself on the stairs. If any community member discovers any problems with the stairs please report it to our office immediately. We will leave a shovel and salt in the buildings so anyone can use it during the times when our office is not open but class is in session. We would appreciate it if the teachers/students would use these tools to make the facility safer for all.

**ISSUE: No known chain of command for Education Center issues**

**BACKGROUND:** When having difficulty getting my VA paperwork processed by the Headquarters of Colleges of Chicago, I routinely ran into brick walls trying to find out who is ultimately responsible. Every term in the 2001-2002 school year, I had to file complaints before my paperwork was processed. Each time in an attempt to find the proper office to help me, I contacted the Ed counselor, BSB XO, and ultimately I called I.G.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Establish whom the schools answer to. Let students know the proper channel for support and establish some kind of QA process to ensure the students are being properly supported.

**RESOLUTION:** There is formal chain of command for education issues. The person may talk to a counselor, if that is not satisfactory, they can talk to the Education Services Officer. If the problem is a post complaint involving unrelated education issues, they will be referred to the S3. If it is an education issue, they must submit their grievances in writing through the Education Services Officer to the Chief of Education in Heidelberg.

According to the counselor familiar with this person, she never expressed to him that she had a problem. She was working only through City Colleges of Chicago. If this had been an IG complaint, they would have contacted the Education Center and I would have accessed the situation and rendered an answer or solution.

## **ISSUE: OCONUS Receipt of Army Echoes**

**BACKGROUND:** Army Echoes is the only Department of Army publication designed to disseminate current information on retirement services matters to all retirees, their families and survivors. Retirees and annuitants view the publication as absolutely essential to their ability to staying informed.

For many of those residents residing overseas, it is the only source of such information because as a group, they are not as computer-literate as their counterparts in the CONUS may be, in part because access to the internet and other computer communications systems are not as prevalent and are more expensive in the OCONUS environment.

Not since the April-June 1995 issue have retirees and annuitants residing in the European area reliably received Army Echoes. Although it appears those with APO addresses enjoy a higher probability of receiving Army Echoes, those with civilian addresses very rarely, if ever, receive their copies. Converting civilian addresses to APO/FPO address is not a solution for many, as they do not live in the vicinity of a military postal facility.

In the intervening years, many retirees have reported the problem through many channels. Responses suggested the issue was the incompatibility of the mailing labels produced by others with the standards of the US Postal service. Others have suggested the issue was the inability of the program that printed the mailing labels to produce them in a five-line format, which is often necessary for an overseas address, as opposed to a four-line format, which is normal for domestic addresses.

In addition, the problem appears to have spilled over to other mailings as well, such as the TRICARE and TRICARE for Life mailings.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Army staff should renew their efforts to identify the problem and solve it for the Well-being of an important part of the Army Family.

**RESOLUTION:** The Chief of Staff Army Retiree Council comments on the issue are quoted here for your information:

>The Army Retirement Services Offices recognizes the significant problem with overseas mailings of Army Echoes. It is clear that DFAS can reach retirees and annuitants using the current database. However, as the database tapes are transmitted to the RSO, the information becomes corrupted and the format becomes unusable. At the April 2003 meeting this Council, DFAS-CL officials expressed their commitment to solve this problem. The Chief of Staff, Army, and Retiree Council recommends the Army Retirement Services Office continues to pursue the issue until it is resolved. Concurrently, overseas retirees and annuitants are highly encouraged to update their mailing addresses to ensure database accuracy. <

## **ISSUE: Reservations for the use of the Family Readiness Center**

**BACKGROUND:** You can no longer make reservations via phone for the use of the facility. This is a problem because the people who primarily use this center have to now make a special trip to make a reservation. It may sound petty, but with soldiers deployed this requires families making the trip on nasty roads and bad weather. The reason they no longer take the reservations over the phone (we are told) is because it gets too complicated when there is a shift change.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Get a big appointment book; place it on the wall or desk. When someone phones in a reservation...write it down.

**RESOLUTION:** Due to scheduling conflicts in the past (such as who signed up first, etc.) there was a rule where the conference room could only be reserved in person. However, the Family Readiness Center has been temporarily moved to another location and there is not a conference room in this facility (Building 369). There is a plan to move the Family Readiness Center to another location it will have a conference room. Then the most convenient way to schedule the room will be used.



**ISSUE:** When a soldier returns to the states and the soldier's family stays in Germany what controls are in place to insure they turn in U.S. I.D. cards?

**BACKGROUND:** Dependents staying in Germany after the military member returns to the states have access to all areas of the community, plus driving cars with US plates on post, shopping in the Commissary and PX

**RECOMMENDATION:** When a family member decides to stay in Germany, issue them an ID card for the authorized allotted time during out-processing. This would ensure the US Army has control over Force Protection and people abusing US ID card privileges.

**RESOLUTION:** The Personnel Services Branch (PSB) has no way of knowing if a family member is intending to stay in Germany if a 4187, for an exception to policy for command support for dependents after PCS, is not initiated. In those cases where a 4187 has been approved, family members may be entitled to continued support for a specified period of time.

In cases where juvenile dependents are left with a former spouse, the children are entitled to ID cards and limited support (the ID Card indicates what support they are entitled to).

If a soldier fails to get an exception to policy and leaves family members behind, he/she is clearly in violation. This then becomes an issue for Customs and Law Enforcement.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The best course of action is to report any suspicious of customs violations to the military police.

## **ISSUE: Driving during winter weather**

**BACKGROUND:** Many people who are from areas that don't often or never get ice and snow are unsure of how to drive during the winter months. Its incredibly terrifying and nerve racking the first time, and unsafe.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Offer a driving course on how to drive safely and defensively during the winter months. This could help improve safety and lower accidents and injuries to soldiers, civilians, family members and local nationals.

**RESOLUTION:** Attendance of a " WINTER DRIVING TRAINING COURSE" for Military, DAC's and German Drivers isn't required by USAREUR Regulation or German Traffic Law, but on a voluntary basis each driver (MIL/DAC) could attend on a Winter Driving Course conducted by ADAC (German Automobile Club) at Forchheim. Telephone number: 0911-9595-253. Cost per Training ca.80 Euro. Two years ago 100th ASG and 409th BSB Safety Office were trying to get such a training funded by 7ATC and USAREUR but with no success because German Traffic Law or Army Reg does not require it.

**ISSUE: Cadences in on post housing areas**

**BACKGROUND:** Physical fitness training being conducted in the On-Post Housing Areas between 0630-0730. Family members should not be awakened to the sounds of cadences being sung in front of their homes. Not only that the elementary school bus stop is there, I personally don't want my child standing by while 20 or so single soldiers run by staring at her, it makes her uncomfortable.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The housing area could be marked with run restriction signs or off limits signs for organized P.T.

**RESOLUTION:** Thank you for bringing this issue to our attention. PT is not allowed in the housing area at all! If you see soldiers doing PT in your housing area call the MP's immediately.

**ISSUE: DOD civilians and DODEA personnel do not get allowances past their physical check out date. Terminations are for end of the month.**

BACKGROUND: German and USAREUR rental contracts can only be terminated effective the last day of a month. Rent has to be paid through this date. LQA and teacher's allowances are not prorated past the physical checkout/departure date, costing the tenant out of pocket expenses for rent. Give employees the means to fulfill legal obligations. No overlapping TQSA for hotel and LQA for rent.

RECOMMENDATION: Active duty and personnel's Housing Allowances are terminated effective the termination date, so nobody pays out of their own pocket. TLA can be paid overlapping with rent so tenants can go to hotel and clear properly.

**RESOLUTION: It is always important to us to take care of our teachers, however, it is a DoDEA policy that pay and allowances end the last day a DoDDS employee is in service. The problem you mentioned, usually only happens when a person is separated for cause.**

**ISSUE: Federal benefits to all Federal employees except US service members, i.e. concurrent receipt for disability and thrift savings plan contributions.**

BACKGROUND: US service members are treated as second-class employees in the federal system. Mailmen and all other federal employees get matching fund contributions to Thrift Savings Plan. They are also able to draw disability and retirement pay with no offset. This is totally unfair and should be fixed. How does a federal employee retire with 20 years services with better benefits than a service member?

RECOMMENDATION: Pass legislation to immediately correct the offset issue. The Federal Government, paid by the same taxpayers, who we are also, employs us all. So why should I pay to continue a system that treats me like second-class?

**RESOLUTION: We appreciate you voicing this issue. TSP is a new and growing program with the membership steadily increasing. In the coming years no one can determine what direction Congress will take it in. We can all only hope that some of the benefits offered to other federal employees will be considered. Please continue to submit this as an AFAP issue to continue to put emphasis on the necessity for change.**

**ISSUE: Local national sign-in procedure and exclusion from MWR programs.**

BACKGROUND: Local nationals have to be signed in every time they want to use the Bowling Alley, etc. Use of armbands/stamps is demeaning and demoralizing. Local nationals cannot sign up for programs like frequent bowling programs.

RECOMMENDATION: Let local nationals register for a permanent “sponsored pass”. Let local nationals participate in MWR programs as long as somebody agrees to sponsor them.

**RESOLUTION: Resolution would be to change the IMA-E policy letter to allow use of a "sponsored pass" and exempt sign-in procedures. Otherwise, MWR facilities must comply with the current IMA-E Policy and AR 215-1 regarding guests of authorized patrons. 409th BSB MWR facilities do not require use of an armband and free access of guests into MWR facilities using a "permanent sponsored pass" would risk violation of provisions in AR 215-1 and the NATO SOFA agreement.**

**ISSUE: Due to force protection, the parking spaces are the “wrong way” in the SAS parking lot at the Vilseck SAS lot.**

BACKGROUND: Try to turn a Suburban around when the lot is full!

RECOMMENDATION: Repaint the lines the correct way.

**RESOLUTION: This situation has been corrected as best can be. Force Protection considerations mean that parking cannot be close to the building. However, a lane has been opened up so that the parking in the lot farthest away from the building can be accessed correctly.**



# MEDICAL AND DENTAL

100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany

**ISSUE: Lack of accountability of pets being brought to or acquired in Germany**

BACKGROUND: Current military policy does not seem to be effective in preventing the abuse and or abandonment of pets in USAREUR. Local animal shelters are reporting increased numbers of pets being either dropped off at the local Tierheim or set free in local communities. They attribute this to the deployment. They also report that many families are acquiring pets without considering the time pets require, the cost of care or shipping, and often end up abandoning them shortly before departure. There also complaints that animal are being abused because there is no system in place to investigate allegations.

RECOMMENDATION: Institute the same policy that Japan has that requires all pets to be registered and micro chipped (for positive identification). Require personnel traveling to Europe to declare the number and type of pets they are bringing. Require personnel wishing to acquire pets once here to get permission to do so. Establish and enforce stiff penalties for violators.

**RESOLUTION: Currently any service member who has a pet is required to register that pet at the Veterinary Treatment Facility on post. Prior to their PCS or ETS everyone is required to out-process through the Veterinary Treatment Facility. This system works well when followed, unfortunately Personnel don't always tell the truth and tell the Out-processing station that they don't have pets and they clear them. I have spoken to the Out-processing station about this and we are trying not to allow this to happen in the future, thus forcing all service members to clear the Veterinary Treatment Facility.**



**ISSUE: Veterinarian support stinks**

**BACKGROUND:** Appointments are cancelled at a moments notice sometimes 3-4 times before a person can see the veterinarian. It's frustrating to have to rearrange schedules and have it cancelled again.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Hire a NAF Veterinarian. They can work the days or times the Army veterinarian has to be out of the office.

**RESOLUTION:** Our unit is a TOE numbered unit, this means we deploy. Due to budget constraints we were unable to hire a new NAF Veterinarian when ours left for the states. Fortunately, we are now able to hire a new one and she should be on board soon, and this problem should be fixed for a few years.

**ISSUE: Optometry Clinic**

**BACKGROUND:** I have been trying to schedule an eye appt for over a month. Every day I try and make one and am told that all appointments are gone; try back at 0730 the next day. All appointments are made on a same day basis. First it's almost impossible to get an appointment and second it leaves little time to get daycare.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Work out appointments on a week-to-week basis, not a day-to-day basis.

**RESOLUTION:** Whenever possible, the optometry clinic tries to accommodate every family member. Currently, family members are being referred off-post for appointments. Family members also have the option to come during sick call. This is available Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 0730-0930 hours. For more information, please contact the clinic.

**ISSUE: Glasses. The eye exam is covered, but glasses are not (for family members)**

**BACKGROUND:** Replacing glasses/lenses each year or sooner when the Rx changes for adults or children can be very costly. My daughter's glasses average \$200 and mine \$300. This causes me to not fill my Rx for glasses right away because I can't afford to do both, so my daughter's glasses come first!

**RECOMMENDATION:** Authorize new lenses every year and new frames every other year. If it is cost prohibitive, you could have a co-payment similar to the dental plan. Ex: a small fee each month for families who require eye care (Dental \$19.74 per month).

**RESOLUTION:** We understand your frustration. It can be costly to replace glasses, especially for two people. Due to the costliness of glasses, DoD policy does allow soldiers to get free glasses and family members to get an annual free eye exam to alleviate some of the cost associated with glasses. The idea of a co-payment is a good idea. Such a program would have to be instituted by DoD.

**ISSUE: Having to make a same day optical appointment, or any doctor's appointment**

**BACKGROUND:** I have a three year old and I have worn glasses or contacts since I was in elementary school. Having to call everyday to see if I can make an appointment is a hassle. It would be way easier and convenient to call even a week in advance to make an appointment giving parents time to make childcare appointments and to be ready for the doctor's appointments.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Require doctors to have at least a week, if not a month, schedule for parents to make appointments. It would be more convenient and less of a hassle.

**RESOLUTION:** Not all appointments are same days. It is possible to schedule an appointment for one or two weeks out. Due to current optempo with deployments and other issues, we had to revert to the same day method at times. We simply do not have the health care providers to allow for greater flexibility. We also now have TRICARE online which allows you to make appointments on the Internet. We know and fully understand that it is hard to keep calling for an appointment at 7 AM. Please be patient, these are turbulent times.

## **ISSUE: Pregnant Soldiers**

**BACKGROUND:** I notice that Vilseck does not have a base program for pregnant females. The units have them come for first formation then releases them until 0900. My soldier was on the overweight program and now she is pregnant. She wanted to still do P.T. with the company but I told her she couldn't because of the profile.

**RECOMMENDATION:** When I was at FT. Campbell, they had a P.T. program for pregnant soldiers called STARS. I enjoyed it because it not only gave you work out routines, but on Thursdays we learned how to take care of babies by going to a class. I think that program should be army wide.

**RESOLUTION:** **There is currently a program available through the Grafenwoehr Health Clinic. There is also an effort being made to bring this program to Vilseck. It is being coordinated through the 100th ASG Health Promotion office to ensure all requirements are met for the safety of the participants.**

**ISSUE: Military children from the ages 2-5 are not encouraged by the Health care facility to have additional screenings.**

**BACKGROUND:** I was told after my children's 18-month well baby appointment for shots and a screening that they did not need to be seen until 5 years of age. This concerns me greatly since there are a lot of spouses in the military that choose not to work and keep their children at home with no type of school evaluation. So many speech problems are not detected until the child starts speaking which usually isn't until two years old. There needs to be a way of tracking that a child is encouraged to be screened at least one time a year.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Preventive medicine. Track by medical records that children between 2-5 years old are screened at least once a year. Have well baby extended to well child throughout the health clinics in the Army.

**RESOLUTION:** This is not true. Every baby should have regular checkups with a health care provider. If someone is putting out info to the contrary, please let either the clinic XO or the Commander know through the patient rep system.

**ISSUE: There is no baby changing station at the Vilseck Health Clinic**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Put a baby changing station in both male and female bathrooms of the health clinic or use a room strictly for that.

**RESOLUTION:** Baby Changing Station has been on order for quite some time. Currently, due to the requirement of funding Deployment missions, the Health Clinic has been extremely over budget. We will continue to make sure this item remains on order and will be installed ASAP

**ISSUE: There isn't a pediatrician in the communities available regularly**

**BACKGROUND:** There have been several times when I have had to see a General Practitioner for my children only to be referred to a Pediatrician. I then had to wait for one to visit in the community. There are many children in these communities that would benefit from having a full time Pediatrician.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Have at least one full time Pediatrician stationed in the Health Clinics

**RESOLUTION:** The issue of no pediatrician has been brought up every year and each year we send multiple requests, through our next higher headquarters, Wurzburg Hospital, and finally to European Regional Medical Command for assistance. Due to the current optempo of the U.S. Military, Healthcare providers are in great demand. Instead, we do have a PED doc at Wurzburg who comes to the clinic once a week. This is strictly a personnel issue that we will continue to fight for.

**ISSUE: Clinic closes on all training holidays and civilian doctors and nurses work but clinic is closed to patients.**

**BACKGROUND:** As military dependents, we don't have much option with health care here in Germany. If the clinic is closed on all training holidays and holidays then we have no option but to go to the German hospital which causes unnecessary extra \$\$\$ being paid out of military budget. But most of all causes the family member extra stress, feeling of being lost in the medical system and aggravation to the child/dependent. We have a 24 hour acute care clinic in Grafenwoehr but when you go there, they tell you they are mainly opened for the active soldier and again you are left out in the cold having to go to the hospital and the Army paying lots of money. If you try to wait it out to get an appt the next day (if not emergency) the clinic don't have enough doctors or appt available for you to be seen. Not to mention the way the nurses and some doctors treat you like you are a nuisance to them.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Better clinic hours, more training on patient courtesy and bedside manner. These nurses, doctors and clinic staff need to know the reason they have a job is because of the patients need. Need to have clinic open on training holiday at least till 5pm and the 24-hour acute care need to see dependents too. The clinic needs to try to take care of the patient's problem the best they can, before just sending them out to the German hospital for any minor stuff.

**RESOLUTION:** We have looked very closely at clinic hours over the past couple of months. Again it is important to point out that we have limited resources and cannot provide all care to all beneficiaries at all times. We have only a single lab tech and a single x-ray tech. In addition we are at about half- staff for the number of providers and the number of medics.

In looking at this issue recently, we concentrated on how productive our providers are when working in the Acute Care Area. In primary care our providers average 3-4 patients per hour worked. In the Acute Care Area they average one patient for every two to four hours worked. This means that they are 6-16 times more productive in Primary Care.

The summary of the issue also mentions the cost of care on the local



economy, suggesting that this is money lost to the government. There is also a cost associated with keeping the primary care clinic open on training holidays and weekends. In fact, we could send all patients seen during non-duty hours to host nation providers and still save the government money compared to the costs of keeping the clinic open during those hours.

There is also a non-monetary cost to the community. When the clinic is staffed during non-duty hours, this decreases the availability of providers during normal duty hours. This translates to decreased availability of appointments since we do not see as many patients during non-duty hours as we do during duty hours.

I also looked specifically at the number of patients seen during training holidays. We have had 9 training holidays since Labor Day Weekend (excluding the Christmas and New Year's break). During those training holidays (duty hours only) we saw 103 people (Minimum of 1, max of 24). This averages out to 12.8 patients per training holiday. A single provider can easily accommodate this patient load. We do not have sufficient demand to justify maintaining full staffing on training holidays. We will continue to man the Acute Care Area on training holidays.

## **ISSUE: How bad is the service at the Health Clinic in Grafenwoehr**

**BACKGROUND:** My baby and my husband were sick. They both had the virus (vomiting and diarrhea). I went to the health clinic and it was at 0600. Nobody was in the back part, which was supposed to be for emergencies. So we went to the front part. My husband could sign in because he is Active Duty but my baby had to wait until 0730 to be seen. I asked the nurse that if even my baby was dying if I had to wait. And she just answered: Yes, those are the rules?? So, we waited and the LT that saw my husband said that I had to wait like 1-1 1/2 more hours to my baby be seen. And that some LT told my husband that that was not a reason to be there. That he needed to read the book "Take Care of yourself". So I ended up going to a German doctor with my baby.

**RECOMMENDATION:** I think that they need to have people over at the clinic know what they are doing. And that know how to treat people and to know the difference of what is a real emergency and what isn't. Because I know for a fact, that most of the soldiers that go to sick call are not even sick. They just do it to miss PT. I was active duty. Now if this happened to me what will happen to other people? What would have happened if my baby were seriously ill? And they just don't care. Change personnel, more supervision from the General. That's my opinion.

**RESOLUTION:** As I see it, there are three main issues covered in the above. They overlap to some extent, so I will address them together.

The three main issues are:

1. Patient Triage
2. Clinic Hours
3. Customer Service

### **Patient Triage**

Triage is a term that is applied in different ways based on the situation, but the general concept is taking a limited resource (health care) and making decisions that allow the optimal benefit to the community given the constraints of those limited resources. There are a number of factors that affect that decision. These factors include severity of illness, likelihood of benefit from intervention, and stability of current

condition, among others. Based on these criteria, patients are placed into three or four broad categories:

**1) Urgent/Emergent**

These are patients for whom intervention is required within 4 hours in order to preserve life, limb, or eyesight. Examples: Heart Attack, Severe Asthma Attack

**2) Priority**

These are patients who are not currently urgent/emergent, but who could deteriorate to an urgent/emergent condition if left untreated. Examples: Moderate Asthma Attack, Appendicitis, Lacerations, and Long Bone Fractures

**3) Routine**

These are patients who do not have a condition which threaten life, limb or eyesight even if left untreated. This does not mean that some of these patients would not benefit from treatment (e.g., shorter duration of symptoms or improved long term outcome). It simply means that treatment, if required, does not need to be initiated in a timely fashion to prevent loss of life, limb, or eyesight. Examples: Cold Symptoms, Ankle Sprain, and Ringworm.

The military health care system is unique in that we have additional constraints placed on us by Congress and higher headquarters. For example, we cannot treat non-beneficiary civilians except in the case of an emergency. This means that even priority patients, if not eligible for care, must be referred to a civilian treatment facility.

Even those patients who are eligible for care have differing levels of priority based on directive from higher. Our top priority is the active duty soldier. That is the whole reason that the Army Medical Department exists. Our primary purpose is to preserve fighting strength and provide a fit fighting force. This means that, all else being equal, the soldier must have first priority for medical care over other beneficiaries. The order of priority for other beneficiaries is dependent of active duty, retirees, dependents of retirees, and DOD Civilians (overseas only). These are usually applied within the broad triage categories mentioned above. In other words, a dependent of a retiree with a priority medical problem would typically still have priority over

a soldier with a routine medical problem.

The Department of Defense recognizes that they will not be able to provide all care to all beneficiaries at all times. The primary purpose of the TRICARE system is to allow non-active duty beneficiaries to seek medical treatment at civilian hospitals when the capacity or the capability of the local military treatment facility is exceeded. We realize that some beneficiaries are more comfortable, because of language and customs, in the American system than in the German system, but we still need to give top priority to our active duty soldiers. We try to accommodate as many other beneficiaries as possible, but we do not have unlimited resources and some will need to be referred to host nation clinics and hospitals.

As for the case of the patient mentioned in the above issue, there is limited clinical information mentioned in the materials given to me. Still, with this limited information, it is possible to give a broad assessment of the appropriateness of the triage decision that was made by the clinic staff.

The patient is described as a baby. This makes it most likely to be a child less than one year of age, although it is hard to put a precise age. It is reported that both the child and the father had diarrhea and vomiting. This makes it most likely that they had an infectious diarrhea syndrome. It is possible that this might have been food poisoning, although one would normally expect the mother to have been sick as well in that case. Food poisoning is also less common than infectious diarrhea.

Viral agents cause the vast majority of infectious diarrhea. These tend to be self-limited diseases with approximately 1-2 days of vomiting and up to a week of diarrhea. There are no medications that will shorten the duration of symptoms. There are medications that are sometimes used to decrease the severity of symptoms, but these can prolong the duration of symptoms so their use is a judgment call in adults. Their use would not be recommended in a child of this age.

The most serious, potential complication of viral diarrhea is dehydration. Tears are one of the first things to stop with dehydration, so it is usually fairly easy to tell with just a glance whether a child is

dehydrated enough to warrant IV fluids. The preferred method of re-hydration, even in mild to moderate dehydration, is oral. Given the above, it is most likely that this child was not severe enough to require IV re-hydration and would have been triaged to a “routine” priority, which is what occurred. How this information was relayed to the mother gets back to customer service and will be dealt with later.

### Clinic Hours

We have looked very closely at clinic hours over the past couple of months. Again it is important to point out that we have limited resources and cannot provide all care to all beneficiaries at all times. We have only a single lab tech and a single x-ray tech. In addition we are at about half- staff for the number of providers and the number of medics.

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(Minimum of 1, max of 24). This averages out to 12.8 patients per training holiday. A single provider can easily accommodate this patient load. We do not have sufficient demand to justify maintaining full staffing on training holidays. We will continue to man the Acute Care Area on training holidays.

### Customer Service

During the first 10 weeks of this year I was in San Antonio for the Advanced Course. Upon my return, I quickly became aware of problems with customer service. Customer service is one of my top priorities so I took immediate action to correct the situation. We have addressed this with our staff, both at the local level and through emphasis from our higher command (Wuerzburg MEDDAC and ERMC). The AFAP Conference took place shortly after my return from San Antonio. I feel that we have made significant improvements in customer service since that time. Our recent customer satisfaction surveys also seem to reflect that with many of our patients giving us excellent ratings across the board. There have been a few issues that have been raised through the customer satisfaction cards, as would be expected, but I have worked with the customer to address those issues to their satisfaction. If there are any other specific concerns, I would be more than happy to address those. (MAJ Jay Allen, Commander, Grafenwoehr Health Clinic)

**ISSUE: Immunization records are not recorded at each military medical facility.**

**BACKGROUND:** If you misplace, or lose, shot records for your children, the clinic cannot produce the dates and shots that have been given to your children. So, you either have to get the shots over again, or you have to have 3 vials of blood drawn to prove that the child has been given the shots before.

Unfortunately, things do get misplaced when moving, etc, and shot records do get lost.

**RECOMMENDATION:** If AAFES can track gas coupons in the computer, why can't the military medical facilities keep a record of every shot administered at their facility for future reference? This could be a logbook (most economical), or a special program designed for the clinics' computers to maintain all shot records given by name or social security number. The computer solution would prove easier to retrieve information if necessary.

**RESOLUTION:** Forwarded to IMA level AFAP Conference, active issue

**ISSUE: Lack of mental health personnel from Dept of Psychiatry in the Vilseck community**

**BACKGROUND:** Vilseck Military Community needs to have a psychologist and social worker located in Vilseck to provide mental health assessment and treatment to the members of the community. There are no services now being provided other than what Dr. Ballenger is able to provide two days per week. He is currently assigned two days per week to provide psychological services to the community but is on loan from the Educational and Developmental Intervention Services Clinic in Ansbach. With the increase in military personnel and family members in the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG, mental health professionals, dedicated to the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG, should be on a permanent TDA. Medical support for psychotropic medications can be provided via the medical professionals in the local dispensaries.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Dr. Ballenger to be reassigned, by lateral transfer from the Ansbach TDA, on a permanent basis, to the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG with a TDA position established in the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG. This reassignment would provide full time psychological support for this burgeoning community. Also, a social worker TDA position needs to be developed, in addition to the psychologist position, in order to provide as much wrap around service as possible. This would eliminate the need for patients to drive to Wuerzburg to obtain psychological and psychiatric services except when there is a definitive need to see a psychiatrist to assess for problematical psychotropic drug use and prescription.

**RESOLUTION:** **We totally agree, however to do something on this scale would take a personnel magic trick. We will forward this suggestion to our higher for consideration.**



**ISSUE: Medical clinic charges for civilian Federal employees.**

BACKGROUND: The medical clinic (Hohenfels) visit charges for civilians have been raised to \$152 per visit. This issue was addressed to the AFAP during the 2000 conference. No information or status on the issue has been forthcoming! I want to again bring the high charges to the attention of this conference. In addition, a charge for the medical prescriptions has been added. I pay an average of \$30 for flu medication. Staff at this clinic cannot answer questions regarding billing charges, etc, and only response is "wait till you get your bill", "you need to talk to Wuerzburg for details".

RECOMMENDATION: Request is to review these charges, lower them and provide feedback to customers

**RESOLUTION: Thank you for your concern. This is a very important issue. Therefore several months ago a new itemized billing system was developed. Please see our records room clerk for more information.**

**ISSUE: Civilians must pay their total medical bill within 30 days of receiving it.**

BACKGROUND: I brought up this concern last year and 1) they said they would resolve it in a timely manner by allowing civilians to use credit cards (this has not happened in the past year – timely?) and 2) not all of us use credit cards. Additionally we now have outrageous bills just for minor checkups and are expected to pay. We can't even get a billing schedule to know in advance what we are committing to!    This is an issue for civilian employees overseas working for Dept of Army. The Navy in Europe actually bills our insurance companies and then bills the civilians for the balance, so this is an Army policy, not a DoD mandate.

RECOMMENDATION: Resolution 1) Set up a way to have a billing plan so we do not have to pay the full bill within 30 days. 2) Set up an office to bill our insurance companies and then bill the remainder to the customer. 3) At least do what you promised a year ago.

**RESOLUTION: With the creation of Itemized Billing or OIB for civilian pay patients, most of these complaints have now been resolved. We now have a credit card machine for patient use and as soon as we can get it probably configured we will have that ability also.**

**ISSUE: Clinic appointments (health and dental)**

**BACKGROUND:** We need routine or non-acute health appointments. Such as sports, physicals, dermatology appointments, etc. Only same day appointments are being made because Hohenfels is so short staffed due to deployments. Working parents cannot call at 7am for same day appointments.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Plan ahead! Perhaps give referrals over the phone-many appointments are referred off post anyway! Don't forget there are people still here!

**RESOLUTION:** All of our community members/customers are important to us. To make appointments easier you can use TRICARE Online ([www.tricareonline.com](http://www.tricareonline.com)) and make appointment on line beginning at 0001 the day you want to be seen. We are currently using an "open access" appointment system to do "today's business today". It is rare that we are 100% booked up all day for every provider therefore it is not necessary to call precisely at 7 am. You may wait until you get to work and give us a call (466-1750) to set up a same day appointment. If we start making appointments ahead of time (a) the schedule could possibly fill up extremely quickly particularly if it is flu season, something is "going around", etc. and (b) when patients do not bother showing up for appointments it is harder to fill the empty spot. Open access is more efficient particularly when we are short staffed. Also, patients cannot be telephonically referred to a local hospital unless it's a known pregnancy or a routine annual eye exam. The providers here must take medical histories at the clinic before any German hospital or provider (particularly specialty clinics or doctors) will accept the patient.

## **ISSUE: Difficulty in acquiring dental care**

**BACKGROUND:** To obtain a same day appointment I have to begin calling the clinic at 0720 a.m. This presents two problems for me. First, 720 a.m. is the time of the day when I (the wife of a deployed soldier) am busy getting children ready for school. Often times I can't get through on the phone, and when I do get through I am put on hold – sometimes for as long as ten minutes. Secondly, by not knowing if I can get the appointment until that morning I cannot line up childcare for other children or even know if I should send my children to school that day. This is only the beginning of the process. A whole new appointment must then be made for a cleaning then if any work is needed another appointment is needed.

**RECOMMENDATION:** We should be allowed to schedule appointments in advance. Exams, x-rays (if needed) and cleanings should all be done at the same appointment. Then if necessary, appointments for further work are made at that time. Dental visits for spouses and children should not be a reward for persistence only!

**RESOLUTION:** Difficulty in acquiring dental appointments is in fact a reality; a reality the dental clinic and its higher command are aware of. We are doing our best in serving the community with the resources available at this time.

As a member of the Vilseck Community, one is aware that a number of our soldiers have been deployed to support other operations. So many in fact, that many of the establishments on post have reduced the number of hours they are open due to the lack of patronage. Many of our assets (11 dentist and their assistants who are the bulk of the dental providers in our communities) were also a part of that deployment, though we have maintained our regular hours of business to include after hours emergency care to accommodate the community. For a better understanding of what our deployed doctors are doing in Baghdad, we encourage everyone to come and take a look at our pictorial bulletin board dedicated to them.

The fact is that we have only 3 dentists to serve a community of over 8,400 beneficiaries, yet we continue to treat soldiers and their family

members with both preventative and sustaining care. In addition, we have recently lost our Pediatric dentist and the projection for a replacement is dim. The good news however, is that we are scheduled to receive another contract general dentist in early July 2003. We also do have and will continue to have an Orthodontist to serve our community. We are also staffed with 3 contract hygienists who handle all the preventive and cleaning appointments. Coming this fall we are going to get two more military dentists to work in the clinic. Our concerns of serving this community are addressed at every month's Wuerzburg executive staff committee meeting, and they hear our pleas for more help. It should get better over the coming months. Exams are done on a same day appointment. We are trying to be as efficient as possible and we cannot estimate how many people will call in for a same day emergency dental problem. In order to accommodate a large 15-20 patient sick call potential, we leave one. Doctors' books open to do those and to do exams. On a day when it is a slow sick-call day, the doctor does more exams and tries to fill up the appointments by doing treatment on the exam patients. Usually cleaning appointment is not done on the same day because after the exam, the doctor must read the x-rays, chart his findings and prescribe a treatment plan. Based on the doctor's findings, a cleaning appointment may not be number one in the priority of care. So, if further work is needed we schedule that appointment in the first available slot. In some instances, if the treatment calls only for a cleaning we will try to fit the patient in on the same day of their exam. Again, this is rare due to the high demand for appointments. As for being allowed to schedule appointments in advance; we do accommodate our patient's with follow-up appointments, as appointments are available between the doctors we have on staff; this is done after the patient's initial appointment for their examination and x-rays.



# HOUSING, RELOCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany

**ISSUE: Excessive noise at the dining facility disturbing diners**

BACKGROUND: PLDC classes have a standard of "sounding off" when entering the dining facility. Some cadre require this as some way of building esprit de corps within the group. "Charlie Rocks", "Gators" and "Bulldogs" can often be heard deep into the dining area. This practice is often excessively loud (Bulldogs sometimes even bark) and disturbs me and other diners. Additionally, it disturbs residents of the barracks across the street from the dining facility.

RECOMMENDATION: I recommend that PLDC leadership review the training objective that they are meeting by requiring the soldiers to "sound off" with the goal of meeting it through another method. If they determine that they can build motivation in their soldiers without causing this disturbance, then I recommend discontinuing the practice.

**RESOLUTION: The Deputy Commandant and 1SG assessed how loud the PLDC is when companies are standing in line. During that observation, we were unable to hear significant noise from the soldiers. We will continue to monitor the situation and make changes if necessary.**

**ISSUE: Rations at the 1-4 Dining Facility.**

BACKGROUND: The rations given at the 1-4 DFAC are small and usually I am unsuccessful at getting a second helping. I am told that I have to wait until 10 minutes prior to closing.

RECOMMENDATION: Give soldiers the food they want. Don't make them wait until closing.

**RESOLUTION:** We strive to adequately feed all of our customers and still follow directives. We have to take guidance from HQ DA who tell us that a soldier is only entitled to 1-meat, 1-starch and 1-veg off the mainline and a choice of two breads, salad bar items and assorted condiments i.e. soda, ice cream milk cereal etc. We at the 1-4 DFAC have exceeded the requirement and quite often allow soldiers to get two servings of starches and vegetables on occasion, when requested. Meats on the other hand are high dollar items that definitely affect my account status. IAW regulation DA PAM 30-22, a dining facility cannot be in an overspent status for three consecutive months. So that's why we monitor products served.



**ISSUE: No in/out-processing center on post**

BACKGROUND: Getting info at or about Graf is a hit-and-miss campaign. Give us a week to in-process

RECOMMENDATION: Create

**RESOLUTION: In processing is centralized and is conducted in Vilseck. Graf has an out processing office located in Bldg 636. IAW UAREUR Regulation 612-1, Chapter 4, paragraph 6a, In-processing is 12 days. GEN Bell just issued Policy Letter 12, providing for an addition 5 days to in-process. In-processing length cannot be changed at this level.**

**ACS issues welcome packets for Vilseck and Graf there is an abundance of information available. Soldiers should be provided by any additional information from the sponsor.**

**ISSUE: Taxis aren't allowed on base.**

**BACKGROUND:** The off post shuttle limits when a soldier without a car can get off/on post. There are only two shuttles per day on the weekend leaving from and going to the Parsberg train station.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Allow on post taxi services, or increase the frequency of the shuttle to the train station/off post.

**RESOLUTION:** There is a security concern as many taxi drivers (in Germany) are recent immigrants and might not be clearable for a number of reasons by the host nation police per UR 190-16. The required obtaining of a Police Good Conduct Certificate costs the applicant 20 Euros and must be paid by the applicant or his firm as part of the installation Pass application process. This is an economic disincentive for many firms and individuals and increases the likelihood that an agent or member of an organization opposed to the interests of the US could enter post to do harm or kill/injure. The matter of taxis driving unsupervised around post after dropping off their passenger(s). This is an excellent opportunity to conduct surveillance by a terrorist group. This vulnerability impacts or neutralizes expensive on-going security and Force Protection measures in place at Hohenfels. Sponsors of new personnel arriving by train could coordinate to check out a government non-tactical vehicle to meet arriving personnel. The requirement to provide a safe installation environment outweighs the personal desires of a few incoming personnel.

**ISSUE: Storage of household goods at government expense.**

**BACKGROUND:** Under the current program you may send furniture etc. to storage when you PCS at point of departure, not new duty station.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Most people cannot predict the future let alone size of quarters or houses at a new duty station. We need an option of shipping - say 3 months prior or 3 months following PCS so we can wait until in new quarters to determine what must be kept in storage. I understand this would not be feasible overseas, so only an option for stateside moves.

**RESOLUTION:** Thank you for your concern in this area, this is one issue that concerns many station overseas. You may arrange shipment of your property as soon as you get orders and may wait three months after to ship your property as long as you have the BSB Commander approval to stay in quarters. Unfortunately if you decide to ship your property at PCS time you can possibly be charged for two shipments. When the two are of the same type, i.e., HHG or Unaccompanied Baggage shipments from and to the same locations. To eliminate the possibility of excess charges, the transportation entitlement must be changed, and this requires approval by the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR) entitlements committee. Also within the sponsorship program the sponsor on the other end should provide some information on housing.

**ISSUE: Transporting vehicles overseas.**

BACKGROUND: Most families have more than one vehicle. Many families ship two vehicles overseas. To arrange shipping, getting quotes verifying integrity of businesses is time consuming and frustrating during a very stressful time - change of stations.

RECOMMENDATION: Augment the current program - by allowing soldiers to ship an additional vehicle at his own expense, but using the same company and procedures as when shipping a vehicle at government expense. This would save a lot of headaches. It's a win for the soldier, win for the company shipping and the Army has a less stressed soldier. Only drawback -must make sure the company does not charge the soldier an outrageous price!

**RESOLUTION: Unfortunately due to current regulations, we cannot resolve locally. This would require contract modification between the Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) and the worldwide vehicle transporter.**

**ISSUE: No bus transportation to Vilseck/Graf.**

BACKGROUND: see issue

RECOMMENDATION: A shuttle – one per day to these areas, especially for folks without transportation or when the weather's poor.

**RESOLUTION: Understanding your concern on this matter, but the law governs our shuttle service and the current regulations forbid us to use a shuttle that is not for official business. We can only provide service to the housing areas and facilities in our local community. Due to current regulations, we cannot resolve locally.**

**ISSUE: DPW never has nay appointments available in the morning so I the spouse have to miss work waiting on the repairman in the afternoon.**

**BACKGROUND:** Within the past two weeks, I have had repairs done to my quarters 3 times. Every time it has been in the afternoon between 1 pm and 4 pm. I work in the afternoon from 12pm-6pm! My SM is never allowed to stay home for these appointments so I end up having to stay home, not knowing exactly when these people are going to show up. If I have to reschedule an appointment I have to deal with attitude from the woman on the other end of the phone - telling me I have to stay home that afternoon

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**RESOLUTION:** The DPW offers morning, afternoon, or, for some types of work, evening appointments. In this case it may be that the work needed to be done soon, and all morning appointments for that type work had already been booked for the near future. Unfortunately, since our workmen cannot always tell how long a specific job will take until they arrive on site, it is not possible to schedule to the hour. Ultimately, the sponsor is responsible for the quarters, and if necessary, the chain of command needs to support the sponsor with time off, if required, to handle appointments.

Without further information, it is not possible to know the situation regarding what seems to be a customer's dissatisfaction with the appointment scheduling process. Our Service Order Clerks handle over 13,000 calls per year. They are trained to be polite and helpful, But everyone can have a bad day. I have not received any calls in the past year regarding poor customer service, but if it did occur, then we deeply apologize. Customers are encouraged to use the new ICE (Interactive Customer Evaluation) system to provide feedback to the DPW and other customer service organizations.

**ISSUE: The road out to Big Mike should be widened to the ball fields.**

**BACKGROUND:** The road out to the baseball/soccer field is 1 lane now. There are a few areas where people can pull to the side and let cars pass.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Widen the road enough so two cars can fit on the road. Leave the bridge one lane and designate a right-of-way

**RESOLUTION:** This issue requires further study to determine costs. The suggestion has merit, but the land where the roadway is now is very soft and it would be expensive to widen the road. Once costs are determined, then the project must compete with many other projects for pending funding

**ISSUE: Cobblestone area that surround the entire elementary school**

**BACKGROUND:** The cobblestones are very uneven and difficult to walk on much less push a stroller on for visitors with small children. Many children and adults trip on these or twist their ankles.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Replace with bricked sidewalk.

**RESOLUTION:** This is a DoDDS funding issue. Right now they have very little funds available.

**ISSUE: Visitor parking and larger streets in new Fitzum community**

**BACKGROUND:** There is a small street and parking enough for each house but not enough space for visitors or away traffic

**RECOMMENDATION:** Take some space from a field at the end of each street and making a parking lot.

**RESOLUTION:** Further study is required. This is a built-to-lease housing area and two off-street parking spaces were provided, one in the garage and one outside the garage. The street was built narrow in line with current German practices. This conserves land and also slows speed through the area. Therefore parking for visitors may be limited. Residents and visitors parking on the street need to do so in a way that still allows thru traffic, including fire trucks. The lands at the end of the streets, suggested for additional parking, is private property. We will have to look into this possibility, but it is unlikely that the owners would release the land at a reasonable cost for parking. They can realize more by developing it for housing. It is probable that no significant change can be made to the present parking situation.

**ISSUE: Water boiler heaters in housing does not always work in the winter months**

**BACKGROUND:** In the winter the water heater inside the housing seem to always be off even when they are turned on. The homes with small children then will not be warm enough and the children will get sick

**RECOMMENDATION:** Provide training on the best settings for them. Have DPW annually service them to prevent clogging or whatever keeps them from working. Put electric heaters in the housing units

**RESOLUTION:** The initiator of this issue seems to live in the Kittenberg Housing Area from the description of the issue. In this area, the water heater and the building heating are interconnected. The system is set up so that priority goes first to heating the domestic hot water in the boiler, and then it is switched over to heating the rooms in the house. Under ideal conditions, the system works because the time to heat the water in the water heater is only 15-20 minutes. Realistically, however, when the outside temperature gets very cold, i.e., below 10 degrees F., the heating system has a hard time pushing enough hot water through the homes to keep up with the demand. Also, we have found problems where occupants have attempted to adjust the system controls to get hotter water. This can cause the heating system to shut off. We reset the controls when this happens.

This problem is being addressed in the following ways: In 2002, heating controls were replaced in over 300 homes to better distribute the flow of hot water. Some homes that were getting more than their share are getting a little less heat and those homes which were always cold are getting more hot water. Hot water boilers are being replaced. Many of the original hot water heaters (over 140) have been replaced with new models that are more efficient. This program will continue, as funds are available. New front and back doors will be installed in all the town homes by the end of 2003. This program is already underway.



**ISSUE: Housing carports**

**BACKGROUND:** My problem is our housing carports. Our carport is making stains on our car all the time and keeps damaging our car. I called housing office many times for a past year and ask for help. I have seen DPW exchanging carports in our street except ours.

**RECOMMENDATION:** If housing (DPW) would come and look at it. And see how bad our problem is.

**RESOLUTION:** This problem has started to occur in some areas on Vilseck within the last 3 years. It seems like the paint on the roofing panels of the carports has started to oxidize or turn to powder. During cool mornings in spring and fall, water condenses on the underside of the carport roofs and runs down to the structural beams where it then drips onto cars below. The stain referred to is the white powdered paint. Last year \$70,000 was spent (all that could be spared) to replace approximately 50 carport roofs. Another \$70,000 is programmed for this year. It will take another 2 years to catch up with the problem. In the mean time, residents are advised to wipe off the stains as soon as they are noticed or to park their cars outside of the carports during the 3-6 weeks of seasonal change in summer and fall. Unless more money can be diverted to this program, we cannot proceed faster.

## **ISSUE: Last names on post housing**

**BACKGROUND:** Some posts have names on houses throughout the Army and some do not. Some houses in Vilseck have names i.e.. Brigade Commander, some stairwell. Why is it not universal? It's also a readiness issue. Can't even learn your own neighbors' last name. Soldiers walk around with name on uniforms, but you can't learn your neighbors name without seeing the soldier in uniform. Also if a spouse needs to find a person when spouse is deployed this helps tremendously. Here in Vilseck all the houses look the same. Names would help identify people. It is also an ownership. Civilians can have a big name on the mailbox out front. We need to be uniform. All of the houses on or off. At Fort Leavenworth names are on houses and the change over is every 10 months. If they can do it anyone can. Please give us some small ownership.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Put the names on the houses please

**RESOLUTION:** **AR 210-50, Installation Housing Management, prohibits the use of Army family housing (AFH) funds to provide name signs on family housing units. Government funds may only be used to provide individual building numbers (front and back, if necessary) that are readily visible to emergency vehicles. AR 210-50 further states that residents may install name signs at their expense.**

**ISSUE: Non-disposal of pet waste along walking paths.**

**BACKGROUND:** Residents leaving behind pet waste along main sidewalks when walking their pets. Many people are not picking it up leaving it behind to be stepped in or scattered. Many people do this because they don't want to carry baggies of waste until they find a can or get home to dispose of.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Placing trashcans at intervals along walkways to help encourage cleaning after pets. Soldiers on extra duty or trash details can empty the cans. Cans could be placed about every 100 ft. or so.

**RESOLUTION:** This is an issue of taking personal responsibility for pets by their owners. Placing waste receptacles at close intervals would not necessarily cause dog walkers to clean up. Also, the receptacles become a heavy burden on the trash details. Finally, disposal of someone else's pet wastes by the trash detail is really unfair since many of the soldiers on this detail do not live in family housing.

**ISSUE: Living in Sulzbach-Rosenburg is unfair compared to the people that have it easy on base!!**

BACKGROUND: I live in Sulzbach and I think it's unfair for us who live way out here. We don't get extra money for gas going back and forth every day. The people that live on base have it so, so easy they can walk everywhere if they want to and not worry about if they can afford gas for their vehicle. We have to go up and down a mountain to get to work and lots of curves! And yet the people on base get the same pay as me!

RECOMMENDATION: The Army families that are forced to live in off-base housing should get extra gas money on their pays. It would be an enormous help for us! Please increase the "cola" for those of us living 15 miles one-way from base. We need it. Everything is on base (library, gas station, post office, commissary, PX, work).

**RESOLUTION: According to AR 210-50 Housing Management, the determination for adequate housing due to location is as follows: The one-way distance from the housing unit to the installation is within 1 hour commute by privately-owned vehicle during normal commuting hours, or within other limits to satisfy mission requirements. Sulzbach is within this 1-hour distance, so it would require a revision to the Army Regulation.**

**ISSUE: Outside lights being on a timer with no way to leave them on until you are finished.**

**BACKGROUND:** When you are outside and need the light on, you have to stop what you are doing to go in and turn it back on.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Change how the outside lighting works, or put a motion sensor up by the front door.

**RESOLUTION:** The outside lights were put on motion sensors several years ago in some areas of post as part of an energy savings program. Reducing energy consumption saves money for all taxpayers, including us in the community. Before the project was started, we found that many outside lights in the housing areas were on continuously, 24 hours a day. To re-install switches now would be to spend money resulting in higher energy costs. Limited housing money is needed for other urgent housing needs.

**ISSUE: Lighting in parking lot below Hohenfels Chapel**

**BACKGROUND:** In winter, it's dark and in bad weather slippery – no lights makes walk hard.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Place a light or two there.

**RESOLUTION:** It is always good to have concerned community members, thank you for submitting this issue. We looked into the area around the chapel and determined there are sufficient streetlights in this vicinity.

## **ISSUE: Private rental should be allowed to use self-help**

**BACKGROUND:** Private rentals are not authorized use of self-help, though it would be a great benefit. Most landlords don't do improvements b/c they don't have to. Many tenants would gladly paint; replace light bulbs, etc. if they could use S.H. It is expensive to buy paint, lawnmower, etc. for just 3 years, but it is very nice to live in a lovely dwelling.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Allow all private rentals full access to self-help. Of course, for heavy equipment give military, etc. first choice (set a deadline) then give to all. Paint-give to all. We'll be glad you did.

**RESOLUTION: HOUSING'S RESPONSE:** You're partially right. Private Rentals are not authorized access to Self-Help consumable items, such as light bulbs, paint, salt to put down when it snows, etc. That is because the Congressional appropriation for such expendable Self Help items restricts their use to U.S. government property, which of course is not the case for privately owned rental homes. Private Rental residents, however, are eligible to borrow Self-Help equipment, such as lawnmowers. Check with your local Self Help office for more information.

As for improvements to the Private Rental home, work with your Housing Office to negotiate with the landlord to include all the items you would like done in the unit written into the contract before you sign it. After that, if you want something else done, landlords are under no legal obligation to provide it. However, most Private Landlords offering homes to our community are anxious to have you as a happy customer, and would therefore be amenable to responding favorably to reasonable requests. No harm in at least asking.

**ISSUE: VES school parking**

**BACKGROUND:** There is not enough parking for staff of elementary school or visitors.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Expand parking lot behind CYSD (one that is enclosed in fenced area) to include the entire open field area.

**RESOLUTION:** A project to do this has been submitted. Unfortunately, funds for projects of this type are very limited. This project has not reached the funding zone so far. However, the project will be reconsidered in late summer for possible funding in FY 04.

**ISSUE: Need a bigger parking lot for CDC**

**BACKGROUND:** Parking lot is small and people end up parking in front of the dumpsters and in the handicapped space. It then can get really congested with cars going in and out.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Build a parking lot across the street with an elevated walkway over the road.

**RESOLUTION:** The suggestion has merit, except for the elevated walkway. The solution is to build more parking for both the elementary school, the CDC, and CYA for staff in the area northwest of the CYA. Then more parking spaces would be available for drop-off of children. An overpass is not practical. It would be very expensive, and people are unlikely to use it given the very low volume of traffic on the road. This suggestion will be incorporated with another for further study and cost evaluation.

## **ISSUE: Parking spaces**

**BACKGROUND:** Parking on Graf is very limited, on top of their not being enough parking reserved, parking signs went up in front of the Gettysburg, behind the food court. I think this is absurd; the reserves signs are half of the parking lot. There is no employee parking for the different establishments so this means that employees too are parking in the limited parking areas, which also means that the metered parking is not being monitored by the Military Police, because if parking isn't reserved it is metered, so just about every car should have a ticket everyday.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Because of the threat certain parking is unavailable - this is understood. However the land between the two barracks could be dug up and made into parking across from the DFAC. As well as the land that is in the parking lot in front of alterations and the barbershop and most certainly the land in front of the Gettysburg and behind the HQ's building. Also the quads in front of the post office and Finance could be made smaller to provide more parking. All the quads come to think of it including the ones by the Thrift Store and CPAC.

**RESOLUTION:** Parking is an issue on Grafenwoehr. With the construction that is about to start to support Efficient Basing-East, it will become even more of a challenge. The 100th ASG DPW EP&S Division is looking this at. As buildings go under construction Force Protection 25 meter standoff distances must be applied, making the very areas that were suggested by the issue POC off-limits. We cannot make the quads into parking, since once the 25-meter standoff is applied; there is very little land to develop for parking. The area suggested across the DFAC would not have any space available once the 25-meter setback is applied.

The ASG DPW is investigating the possibility of developing central parking in the vicinity of the ball fields for the entire 600 area in order to mitigate the difficulties resulting from EB-E construction and FP requirements. There will also be substantial parking in the new PX/Commissary complex, with the possibility of additional central parking east of building 621. This will provide significant relief to the present situation.



**ISSUE: Need for improvements in car wash and car vacuum.**

**BACKGROUND:** Each time I have attempted to wash our car in Vilseck post I have found that the machines are not adequate. About 1/2 of the time one of the two are not operating at all. When they are working I cannot see any difference between soap and rinse. It seems like there is no detergent. The vacuums also do not work very well. It is frustrating for me, especially since I live off post and cannot wash my car at home. I would really appreciate improvements and upkeep for a good car wash on post.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Have someone experienced look at and evaluate the car wash and vacuums. Make necessary improvements.

**RESOLUTION:** The Auto Crafts staff checks car wash twice daily to make sure they are operational. The staff tries to repair car wash/vacuum on the spot. When the staff cannot repair items, a contractor is called in. Soap does not come out instantly, also soap used for environmental reasons does not foam as much as soap used in the states. We are currently looking into replacing old hand held car washes.

**ISSUE: Military spouses and family members living off post, in Government housing, while soldiers are deployed**

**BACKGROUND:** Several spouses and/or family members of deployed soldiers are living off post, in Government housing, without extra security or protection in a foreign country. A clear example would be the Sulzbach housing area near the Vilseck post. Several soldiers are deployed from the Vilseck post at this time. Many of those soldiers live in Sulzbach with their family members. Now that several of the soldiers are deployed the families are left living in Sulzbach without any military

**RECOMMENDATION:** I think that soldiers that are placed in deployable units should receive "on post" housing. By providing those soldiers with on post housing the family members will have better access to programs provide to/for them. The families would also be safer "on post". If it is impossible to place soldiers in deployable units on post with their family member at least provide more military

**RESOLUTION:** There is no special, housing assignment category or priority for "deployable" soldiers since all soldiers are potentially deployable at any time. If on-post housing is available when a soldier applies for housing and he/she is eligible for it, assignment to an on-post home can be made at that time. If -- either by soldier choice or lack of available housing for which the soldier is eligible -- assignment is instead made to government-controlled off-post housing (not Private Rental), the family has several options if the soldier is later deployed. These options are described in Appendix W of USAREUR Supplement 1 to AR 210-50. The family may remain in these quarters, and in fact cannot be removed involuntarily without the written direction of the ASG Commander. They may choose to keep possession of the unit indefinitely while returning to CONUS at personal expense. They may elect advance return to CONUS at government expense, and the soldier would be eligible to reapply for their housing here upon return from deployment, if at least 12 months remains of the assignment.

**Families living in Private Rentals may terminate their leases in accordance with terms of their rental contract, absorbing any costs associated at their own expense, and then apply for available on-post housing for which they are eligible.**

**On-post housing assets are very limited. Of the 3257 units currently housing our military families throughout the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG, only 1412 (43%) are on post. Many families do feel secure living off-post in this part of Bavaria, where most of our leased housing units (and all Private Rentals) are well integrated into the local community. Patrols of leased housing communities by MP's, German Polizei, and Border Patrol units occur frequently. While not living on-post, off-post residents can access transportation to DODDS schools and other on-post services and amenities. Contact your Housing Office for more information.**

**ISSUE: All government housing should have fenced yards, no matter how small.**

**BACKGROUND:** Many, if not most, military families have children. I, for one, live on a main road where traffic is fast. I do not feel safe allowing my small children to play outside with the fear of being hit by a car even with me outside with them.

**RECOMMENDATION:** All military housing should come with fencing, not just some.

**RESOLUTION:**  
**282D Response:**

Thank you for your concern over this issue. Since Sept 11, 2001, Force Protection and security standards have gained the attention of the Army's senior leaders to include the 282<sup>nd</sup> BSB Commander. To answer this question more specifically, most of the older Government housing areas and over 50 % of total government houses in the Hohenfels community do not have fenced yards. Some Residents prefer a yard with a fence and some prefer without a fence. For matters of force protection and/or security, residents may request in writing to put up private fences. For upper Schmidmuehlen Built to Lease (BTL) quarters, which the writer is referring to, some requests have already been approved. The Housing Division has asked the IMA Real Estate Field Office to provide funding on a case-by-case basis to fence yards at older Government Housing Areas. Until these requests are funded, residents are allowed to put up private fences as a temporary solution.

**100<sup>th</sup> ASG Response:**

**HOUSING'S RESPONSE:** It is not feasible to erect fencing around the yards of every individual housing unit. The cost would be significant. With limited \$ available for Family Housing, funding would have to come at the expense of other needed maintenance and repair work. For our on-post multifamily (stairwell) buildings -- each currently housing up to 24 families -- installation of individual unit fencing would not be practical. Fences around the perimeter of entire buildings would detract from the sense of neighborhood for these homes, creating an undesirable, institutional impression.

However, if a family wishes to have a fence around their own individual yard, 7<sup>th</sup> ATC Regulation 210-4 (currently in revision) allows them to install it themselves under our Self Help program. Material, including tools and equipment, may be obtained at no charge from Self Help, based upon availability and approval of the fence plan. Contact your Housing Office or Self Help for more information.

**ISSUE: Hohenfels needs a playground for community members.**

BACKGROUND: Hohenfels does not have a park or playground for the community. The school, CDC hourly and the house residents have play ground equipment that is in service. However, the community itself has no place for children to play. Many families live off post and would like to take their children to play at a park to pass time. It's also sad that families who PCS have no place to take their children. Moving is a hard adjustment on children and having a park can help ease the move.

RECOMMENDATION: The installation is Hohenfels as well as every post in the military needs to have a park for families. (More editorial remarks) Accommodate the Sportsplatz or improve it. Make signs that read Hohenfels Park. Clear some trees allowing sun to come into the park and improve the equipment.

**RESOLUTION: Thank you for your concern and your suggestion. As a result, our Child and Youth Services staff is coordinating with the Community Recreation Division and the Directorate for Public Works to see if a central community playground is a feasible option. In addition, we are also looking into the possibility of a providing putt-putt golf area and skate board park on post.**

**ISSUE: Government vehicles parked outside at the TMP not covered against weather (ice and snow, etc).**

**BACKGROUND:** Almost 100 government vehicles are parked at the TMP. During the winter season everybody has to clear his vehicle from ice and snow, which is time consuming and a waste of Government funds. It takes at least 20 minutes to clear the vehicles and get them ready.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Build carports, hanging roofs, etc. It will save a lot of labor hours and workforce would be more effective.

**RESOLUTION:** Thank you for your suggestion as we are always looking for ways to improve our community. However, in this case, it is actually more economical to have employees clean off NTVs then to build carports.

## **ISSUE: DSN phones at the guesthouse**

**BACKGROUND:** DSN phones are only for DSN numbers. Civilian numbers are not allowed. If a guest or walk-in needs to use the civilian phone they have to pay along with the workers. Now if you work there and can't use the phone then something is wrong with the guesthouse.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Put 99DSN phones in the guesthouse.

**RESOLUTION:** 100<sup>th</sup> ASG Army Lodging will be purchasing a new phone system for all three communities in FY04. POC is Jason Powell 475- 7572.

At the current time, there are civilian and DSN phones in Bldg 63, 6 and 70 only. Bldg 7, 71 and 1177 has civilian phones in the rooms and a DSN phone in the hallway. The DSN phones at the Sunrise Lodge are for authorized government use only. You cannot call a civilian phone number from any of the DSN phones but you do have access to a DSN phone line for government use. The Lodge would be unable to monitor “authorized government use only” calls if a 99 DSN line was installed. Signal would have to authorize the Sunrise Lodge to have a 99 DSN line.

Anyone using a civilian phone or fax for personal use has to pay the charges incurred in accordance with regulations.



**ISSUE: Pets in guest housing.**

BACKGROUND: Pets are not allowed in guest housing.

RECOMMENDATION: Maybe a kennel should be built or the guesthouse should allow pets.

**RESOLUTION:** There are 9 rooms in the Sunrise Lodge that are allocated for pets. These rooms are in Albertshof and are pet friendly rooms without carpeting. Once the FY04 Wellness Renovation project is completed, there will be 5 pet friendly rooms in Bldg 7. There is a one-time charge for fumigation at the time of check-in.

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>PET POLICY</b>		<b># PET ROOMS</b>
<b>Ansbach</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Darmstadt</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Friedberg</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>All</b>
<b>Baumholder</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>All</b>
<b>Grafenwoehr</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>10</b>
<b>Hanau</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>All except suites</b>
<b>Heidelberg</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>38</b>
<b>Kitzingen</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mannheim</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Schweinfurt</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Charge</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Vicenza</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Vilseck</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Wurzburg</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Charge</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Giessen</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>Livorno</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Stuttgart</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Bamberg</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Wiesbaden</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>49</b>
<b>Hohenfels</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Ramstein</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Kaiserslautern</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Garmisch</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Chiemsee</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Pets Allowed</b>	<b>0</b>



# CHILD AND YOUTH

100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany

**ISSUE: There is not a breastfeeding policy for mothers who choose to breastfeed in public on post**

**BACKGROUND:** Breastfeeding mothers have been asked at various locations on post to either cover up while breastfeeding or go to a private room, so that “other people don’t have to see it”. In public and private, it is a mother’s and infant’s right to breastfeed and numerous state and federal legislation supports this right. The following states currently protect breastfeeding mothers and infants:

- California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Vermont and Virginia allow mothers to breastfeed in any **public** or **private** location.
- Alaska, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin **exempt** breastfeeding from public indecency laws.
- California, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, Tennessee, Texas and Washington have laws related to breastfeeding in the work place.

In 1999, President Bill Clinton signed the Treasury Postal Appropriations bill, which included the Right to Breastfeed Act (HR 1848). This act ensures a woman’s right to breastfeed her child anywhere on federal property where she and her child are authorized to be.

The purpose of legislation is **not** to legalize it, but to clarify the fact that women and infants have the right to breastfeed in public, or that it is not a criminal offense to do so.

**RECOMMENDATION:** A global breastfeeding policy must be developed and promoted to demonstrate that the Army-like the federal and numerous state governments – protects a woman’s and infant’s right to breastfeed in public on military installations.

**RESOLUTION:** The '*Pregnancy Discrimination Act Amendments of 2000*' were introduced as House Resolution (H.R.) 3861 to promote the health and well-being of infants whose mothers return to the workplace after childbirth, and to clarify that breastfeeding and expressing breast milk in the workplace are protected conduct under the amendment made by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. One of the results of these initiatives is that federal workplaces may establish a private space in the workplace if feasible for breastfeeding mothers to express their milk for their infants. This initiative does not direct federal agencies or military to establish breastfeeding policies for the general population nor is there a prohibition against breastfeeding on military installations. Accomplishing breastfeeding in public is an individual decision in terms of how to best meet the needs of the infant while taking discretion and the mother's need for privacy into consideration

**ISSUE: WICO- there is only one office for the Vilseck and Grafenwoehr area**

**BACKGROUND:** For those of us who live in Graf, we have to travel thirty minutes one-way to get to a WIC appointment. Not everyone has transportation to travel the distance. In addition to the distance, WIC has limited appointments. Recently since there has been a change in staff, the quality has gone down. Apparently they are no longer calling to remind clients of their appointments. No big deal right? It's hard to remember your appointment time when you are only three or four months pregnant.

Although your time is written on your WIC card, if you should use your vouchers one or two weeks before they expire then there is no need to look at your WIC card. I recently missed my WIC appointment and was told that reminder calls were a courtesy and they no longer do that. Of course, my son's WIC checks were out and my daughter is eleven months and out of formula. I was offered an appointment at the end of the month and told that I would have to return on my daughter's birthday to recertify her. Nothing was said about my son's checks, which were out for about two months now. It was suggested that since my eleven month old's birthday was only three weeks out, which was the next appointment, "she would be fine without the formula". When asked if I could come in and pick up the one-month vouchers for my baby and then return on her birthday to recertify her, I was told "no". I believe with the stress of my husband's deployment that was not the answer I was looking for. I would have been satisfied if I could have picked up the last month of vouchers for my infant and returned a month later. The most upsetting part of it all, was the fact that I received a postcard in the mail stating that I had missed my appointment, even after I contacted the office.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Perhaps a WIC representative could come to Graf 2 times a wk during the morning or afternoon. Since courtesy calls no longer take place - they can mail reminder cards that the clients can address to the appointment and send them out at the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

**RESOLUTION:** During the time this issue was presented, the WIC Team Leader for this area was deployed downrange and there was a period of time that the Vilseck office was supervised by other WIC Overseas offices. This resulted in a number of different staff covering the office and reduced the continuity of participants seeing the same staff member for their appointments.

Reminder calls continue to be done; however there were days that staff was unable to call all participants. The staff also asked participants to try to keep their appointments since there were limited appointments due to decreased permanent staff. With staffing now restored, there should be no incidents of reminder calls not being made. We do send out letters to participants that have missed their appointments on a daily basis and ask from them to call and reschedule. Sending reminder letters prior to the appointment have not been as beneficial as the MPS mail is not always predictable.

If members of the Grafenwoehr community feel that the commute time to Vilseck is undue hardship, then it is recommended this issue be raised to a higher level. All requests for new offices are determined by the Program Manager for the WIC Overseas Program at the TRICARE Management Activity in Falls Church, Virginia.

**ISSUE: Lack of activity area for children living off installation.**

**BACKGROUND:** Velburg has a high number of preteens and teens. During the summer, holidays, and after school, these kids are just hanging out or being a nuisance or influencing younger children.

**RECOMMENDATION:** When it comes available, designate 1 set of quarters into a Teen Center annex. There is a vacant lot large enough to build a skate park/tennis/baseball court (fenced of course). Use soldiers and families to help build.

**RESOLUTION:**

**DCA Response:** Thank you for your suggestion on ways to actively engage our teens and preteens. Our Youth Services program is regulated through its' Installation Youth Evaluation Tool by Department of Army. Their philosophy and direction is that, for the safety of our youth, paid employees with background checks must supervise all middle school and teens and they must meet specific training requirements. Volunteers can assist paid staff but cannot count in ratio. Also, in order for a facility to be used for public use, it must also meet "public assembly" or "general assembly" laws that are required in the area of fire, safety and health. Regarding the second part of the recommendation, CYS is currently researching the possibility of constructing a skateboard park and we'll provide future updates as things progress.

**DPW Response:** Unfortunately, there is a shortage of Army Family Housing in the Hohenfels military community. However, there is a teen center in the Hohenfels community and youth services facilities available. It would be unfair of us to take space from a shortage category and it is unlikely to be approved at the headquarters level. This proposal would need the commander's approval, and a DCA manpower commitment prior to DPW housing obtaining higher headquarters, IMA-E Real Estate, the host nation Federal Assets Office, and the dwelling unit owner's approval.



**ISSUE: No place for children (ages 2 - elementary ages) to play indoor or to have birthday parties.**

BACKGROUND: All elementary school aged children end up holding birthday parties at the bowling alley because it is the only indoor place to go. The Tower View charges too much (I think \$150). We need a place for children to go play when the weather is bad; somewhere like a Power Zone, Chuck E.

RECOMMENDATION: Set aside an already existing building (such as the old Colters) and start asking for toys and equipment to be donated or purchased. If Grafenwoehr has such a great reputation as a "Community of Excellence" why is there no indoor play area?

**RESOLUTION: At the present time we offer weekly in each community, a play morning for parents and children 0-4. There is no cost and the programming includes activities that assist the parents and the children interact with each other. Each session is 90 minutes. The locations are for Vilseck the CYS Building 1st floor (bldg 224) and in the chapel annex in Grafenwoehr. Dates are subject to change so please call ACS for current dates.**

## **ISSUE: No facilities for pre-school aged children to play**

**BACKGROUND:** During the winter months, there are no outlets for families with small children. ACS runs a great Play morning, but that's only 1 1/2 hours each week. We need some type of indoor play area similar to what you might see at McDonald's. My 2 1/2 year old is too young for gymnastics class and we're both stir crazy with no outlet for him to work off energy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Short term: any open space on post (if it exists) can become a play space - it needs to be tall as opposed to occupying a lot of floor space. I know this is not very feasible. Long term: Graf is in for some major expansion in the coming years - perhaps the planners could build this in. An indoor play place near the food court would be a big hit.

**RESOLUTION:** The Army authorizes play areas in the form of approved child and youth programs available through the DCA. (DCA needs to address whether a 'stand-alone' unsupervised play area can be legally established) For a longer term plan, the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG DPW will work with AAFES to incorporate a play area into the design of the new shopping center with Food Court planned for Efficient Basing East (construction completion in November 2006). This project is entirely funded by AAFES and incorporation is at their discretion.

## **ISSUE: Lack of childcare (paid) for volunteers**

**BACKGROUND:** There are many parents with children who are willing to give their time to organizations on post. Those who are parents of pre-kindergarten aged children are being turned away due to a lack of child-care funding to keep children in day/hourly care. The Vilseck community alone had over 800,000 hours of volunteer time given last year alone. Just imagine the cost for 800,000 hours of paid time positions. I do not feel that volunteers with children should be DISCRIMINATED against or that \$2.50 per child per hour is too much for the government to afford for those parents willing to give their time to the community. The military wastes plenty of money in other areas, why not use a little toward supporting family members who are willing to help out.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Look at how funding is distributed and redistribute to allow more money for volunteer childcare. Heck, Congress makes enough, maybe they should donate to a fund to help with volunteer childcare for their military. They could set it up like the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Speaking of CFC, why not give that as an option, to donate back to the community. Or, set up NAF funds so that an organization can donate to childcare instead of the "big pot".

**RESOLUTION:** **There was a lack of funding and ACS ran out of NAF funds for a while. Child Care for volunteers could not be paid anymore. AF funds were only available for certain functions. Funds are available again for Child Care for volunteers.**

## **ISSUE: 409th BSB Youth football selection of teams**

**BACKGROUND:** Powers that were in place in the past started a precedent of making team "A" the preferred team to be on. Children cried and parents protested when their child was put on team "B". This is an unhealthy precedent to set for sportsmanship, leadership and child development in general. (At the football banquet team "A" manager/coaches stated to all "We've saved the best for last").

**RECOMMENDATION:** The powers in place i.e. commissioner, manager or parent should not be allowed to select teams. If enough children sign up that requires 2 teams in the same age categories. The teams will have shared talents equally. The perception that one team is better than another should not be re-enforced by all. Coaches evaluate each child's talents should be evaluated and disperse evenly on teams.

**RESOLUTION:** Similar complaints from families gave us the opportunity to restructure our team selection process last year. The current process involves skill evaluations and team assignments by our CYS staff. Neither coaches, commissioners, nor parents are involved in the decisions regarding team selection. The only caveat is that we allow coaches' children to be on their team to help out with transportation and logistical issues. We believe that these changes have resulted in more balanced teams and fairness to all.

**ISSUE: Teens in the area**

**BACKGROUND:** What good is the Teen Center if it's closed on the weekends? During the week the kids have homework and chores. The 14 – 17 year olds need more things to do. We especially need more shopping trips.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Rearranged work hours depending on the number of people going in. If you ask me these folks don't work hours that benefit certain folks.

**RESOLUTION:** Thank you for your suggestion. We began opening on Saturdays from 1300 – 1700 hours on 21 June 03. We hope that these hours meet the needs of our community's youth and we will closely monitor its' usage to determine if future adjustments to the operating hours need to be made.

**ISSUE: Teen center does not open until 2pm even on school days out and half days.**

**BACKGROUND:** I live off post and work full time job. No school day or half school days leave me to worry about what to do with my daughter during the closed time. I often take her with me to work, but often time wished she could just spend her time at the teen center. I could leave her at home, but would overstep timeframe (USAREUR policy) that she could be home alone (No more than 3 hours)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Teen center should operate according to school schedule/hours.

**RESOLUTION:** The teen center opens at 1300 on school-out days. Last year, the program opened earlier to offer a place for the youth to go on school-out days and no teens attended until after lunch. The hours were adjusted to meet the needs of the community. We can survey the teens again and if there is enough demand, offer earlier opening hours. For clarification, the USAREUR Child Supervision guidelines referred to in the background information, allows 6th and 7th graders to stay home alone for up to six hours in a 24-hour period. For 8th and 9th graders, youth may stay home alone except overnight.

**ISSUE: FCC and CDC need to be more user friendly, esp. FCC. Readiness affected by parents not registering children, preparing paperwork and having a plan for childcare for emergencies and just plain stress relief.**

**BACKGROUND:**

1. \$15 fee deters parents from registering children
2. Paperwork needs to be combined better. One form done at registration, with all releases signed then!
3. Children who aren't registered aren't deployment ready for emergencies causing hardship on parents and child and on command.
4. There is more paperwork for the provider than in nursing care and as much formal lesson plans as if we were actual elementary teachers.
5. Some menu items required unreasonable more flexibility needed.

Additional issue here: Dependant parent can't use TRICARE. Solution: make all dependants

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Take the \$15 fee out of the 1st months respite care vouchers for E4 and below. This way there's no cash out of pocket and they can use the care. Also need to get info on respite care, emphasized by chain of command so you know they get it. Mandatory that wife signs off on info!! This insures soldier will comply and give info to wife, which does not always happen.
2. Info often on 3 or 4 forms, same info. Not necessary to repeat it, it's a hassle to fill out, causing some parents to walk away, also the more consolidated it is, the faster and easier it is to find info.
3. In Europe, children should either be registered with an FCC emergency plan, or a Family Readiness plan should be done as in dual military. This should NOT BE OPTIONAL! Command should require a plan for emergencies. As part of readiness, as most have no family here.
4. It is possible to teach without such formal lesson plans. Streamline more and be a bit less rigid. User friendly. Don't discourage so many providers. I know several who just gave up.
5. One item called for is lasagna, to be prepared while children in care! This costs me \$10 to 15 a pan, and is time consuming to make. I may only have 1 child for an hr, so I'd lose money and need things to prepare quickly, so I can be with the children. I can see a guideline, but not specific menus.

It can still follow nutrition guidelines and give you freedom to prepare things like homemade soup. And if this is prepared fresh the night before and stored properly, this should be ok too. If I were the mom, I'd cook when kids were asleep, so I could give my attention to

## **RESOLUTION:**

**1. Issue: The \$15 fee deters parents from registering children. We provide free childcare for all families during in processing. At that time, they receive information about respite care and other CYS programs and services in the Welcome Packet. Similar information is communicated to parents through FRG's, local media outlets and through the Chain of Command. Offering free registration in conjunction with the respite card is not possible with our current accounting system. However, any family who comes into the Central Registration office and is financially incapable of paying the registration fee is referred to ACS for financial assistance. Additionally, we are currently offering ½ price first time registration to families with a deployed parent to encourage people to register with CYS.**

**2. Issue: Paperwork needs to be combined better: To enroll in any CYS program, parents or guardians must complete a basic emergency information form and a financial data sheet. Parents then choose a program for their child (CDC, FCC, SAS, Middle School/Teen, Youth Sports, Instructional programs). Each of the CYS programs has specific data sheets (different from those at Central registration) that apply specifically to that program. Since the issue relates specifically to FCC care, the FCC provider as a private businessperson must have a contract, a child profile, and a transportation agreement. Although the paperwork may seem burdensome, all the information we collect is important for the safety and well being of the children and youth.**

**3. Issue: All children should be registered with CYS and have a Family Readiness Plan.**

**CYS staff agrees with this issue, however we do not have the authority to mandate parents to do either. Our regulations require single and dual military families to have a Family Care Plan on file. During the recent deployment, we had several cases in which families needed emergency childcare and were not registered with CYS. This slows the process and causes unnecessary stress to the family when emergencies**



occur.

**4. FCC providers must complete activity plans.** FCC providers are discouraged from opening FCC homes. Our goal is to provide consistent, developmentally appropriate programs and activities in all CYS programs. Parents who choose FCC care expect their children to participate in a high quality program that focuses on physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills. Because our FCC Director and Training and Curriculum Specialists cannot constantly monitor the FCC homes, they rely on written plans and records to evaluate and support the FCC provider. Good planning assures that children are actively learning and interacting in safe environments. FCC providers are carefully screened, and complete background checks for their entire family, complete a 40-hour orientation, health, fire and safety inspections and a home interview before opening their homes. FCC is not for everyone. The purpose of the screening and orientation is to assure that providers understand both the positives and negatives of operating an FCC home. FCC staff present realistic expectations for providers so they fully understand their responsibilities and commitment before opening an FCC home. The orientation is not intended to be discouraging, but a realistic portrayal of the life of an FCC provider.

**5. FCC menu requirements are too stringent.** CYS uses standard menus, based on guidelines from the US Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program to assure adequate nutrition and variety. Currently the menus are under revision, incorporating input from parents, FCC providers and CDC/SAS staff in our community. FCC providers and facility cooks are trained to know that substitutions are permitted, they only need to meet the same nutritional requirements as the standard menu and be posted for parents to see. Providers are encouraged to prepare food ahead and store according to safe food handling practices.

**ISSUE: Children in daycare.**

BACKGROUND: I strongly believe that the children need a structure time during the day when they learn their alphabet, numbers, colors and fruits and vegetables. My daughter has been in many different civilian daycares because the military is too expensive. But the daycares would take and start the alphabet and colors (etc) at the same time the kids started school. Then when they finished the alphabet they would work on numbers. It really helped my daughter a lot with her speech and pronunciation. In the states, most schools have pre-K, 3, 4 or 5 year olds and then kindergarten and then 1<sup>st</sup> grade kids seem to do better with a process in daycare.

RECOMMENDATION: We need to have the children have a class time every day so that they learn discipline and structure. It is really helpful when they start school.

**RESOLUTION: We understand and have empathy with your concern about your child having discipline and structure in daycare. However, the Department of Defense and the Army Child and Youth Services have determined that our military child development centers are social childcare facilities and should not teach via institutional methods. This philosophy is outlined in AR 608-10, Developmental Appropriate Practices, training requirements and accreditation standards (NAEYC). Therefore, until such time as our governing regulations change, we are required to follow our higher headquarters' guidance.**

**ISSUE: Children enrolled in part-day programs at the CDC (Preschool) are not allowed to use hourly care.**

**BACKGROUND:** My child is enrolled in Part-day preschool at the CDC in Vilseck. On the days he attends preschool he is not allowed to attend hourly care, except on an "every now and then" basis. I am a volunteer and cannot volunteer on the days he has preschool unless I take him with me. The community asks people to volunteer, but this situation makes this very difficult.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Allow children who are enrolled in Part-day programs at the CDC to use hourly care on a more regular basis by changing the policy

**RESOLUTION:** Army Regulation 608-10 provides guidance for CYS program operations. The specific regulation applicable to this issue is found in AR-608-10 5-2b2 on page 40 of the regulation and reads, "Hourly care services are not intended to replace requirements for full or part-day care. " "The CDC director will ensure that hourly care spaces are retained for short term intermittent services. These spaces will not be filled by full or part-day overflow patrons requiring services on a regular basis". In the 409th BSB, we do accommodate requests for hourly care to extend the part-day preschool hours on an occasional basis and as space is available. For parents who require more than part-day hours on a regular basis, we offer both a half-day (between 0545 and noon and between noon and 1800) program and full-day programs.

**ISSUE: School plans delayed openings for mornings rather than letting out early on teacher training days.**

**BACKGROUND:** Teacher training hours are scheduled as delayed openings rather than closing early. Kids are on their own in the morning, even if bus route service is provided.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Close early on teacher work days, work with military to coordinate days off.

**RESOLUTION:** The recommendation could be considered an option. It has been found that delayed openings are easier to implement due to no busses running and fewer parents dropping children off even if school is delayed. Delayed openings are usually more effective for training than afternoons.

**ASG Response:** The decision for delayed openings is based on the following rationale: It is more advantageous to have a delayed opening to hold staff meetings at beginning of day and ensure that after school activities (sports, labs, etc. don't have to be rescheduled). Regarding calendars--all schools make every attempt to coordinate with military calendars--but can't always accommodate--a school may need a training day for special instruction from district--but district staff have 25 schools to teach and can't manage to visit each school on a military training holiday.

**ISSUE: Speech therapy.**

**BACKGROUND:** My child needs speech therapy. She is in Sure Start.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Give her what she needs. The teacher thinks she needs it too.

**RESOLUTION:** We are concerned about all our children and ask that you and your child stop by the office and discuss this with us. There is a program in place in which, a child must qualify for Special Education Services, if the child qualifies according to the law services will be provided.

**ISSUE: Son may be disenrolled from school because I have been mobilized to the Gulf.**

**BACKGROUND:** I was notified Monday (6 Jan 03) that I am being mobilized for the possible war with Iraq. Normally, I am employed as a contractor and my company pays for my son to go to Hohenfels Elementary. However, since I am leaving them for 1 – 2 years as a result of the mobilization, they feel that I should be space required (no change.) The registrar at Hohenfels Elementary told me that if my company didn't pay, I would have to pay \$12K for my son to go to school or he would be disenrolled. The bottom line from my perspective is that my son is getting screwed because I am going to war for my country.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Mobilized reservists' families who are already in Europe should be considered space required.

**RESOLUTION:**

**Mike Lynch, DoDEA Chief of Staff Response:**

**This note clarifies the DoDEA policy on dependent eligibility for Reservists mobilized for active duty from an overseas area. Dependents of Reserve members will be eligible for Space Available, tuition-free enrollment at DoDEA schools under the following conditions: Permanently stationed overseas; Recalled for active duty; recalled for a contingency operation; and recalled for more than 31 days. All other requirements remain the same for enrollment eligibility (i.e. copy of orders, birth certificates, passports, etc). Upon demobilization, students enrolled under this provision will be allowed to complete the current semester as Space Available, tuition-free. Our general counsel staff has determined that the "permanent station" for Reservists remains the home from which he or she was recalled. The dependent of a Reservist recalled from an overseas location, is eligible for enrollment as Space Available, tuition-free. The dependent of a Reservist recalled from a CONUS location, does not meet the "permanent station requirement" and is eligible for Space Available, tuition paying enrollment. As a reminder to all, Space Available dependents are not eligible for Non-DoDDS placement/**

## **282D Response**

**We understand your concern and due to this issue coming up in the past, before AFAP was held, DoDDS-Europe decided to allow contractors who are also reservists and a deployed to be space available tuition free during the time deployed. Please contact us if you need more information.**

**ISSUE: Get a real cafeteria at a school for all kids. Not AAFES fast food!**

**BACKGROUND:** Hire a nice Grandma to cook real food and not AAFES fast food lunches. Too many fats and fried foods! Cook good stuff!

**RECOMMENDATION:** Take care of kids with hot good food at all schools.

**RESOLUTION:**

**FSD Response:** Lunch menus are approved by a DOD nutritionist and certified as healthy. However, AAFES provides the food service. Perhaps this issue would be better addressed by AAFES

**AAFES Response:** Our menu is structured by an AAFES staff dietician based upon USDA guidelines. There are no fried foods on our menu.



**ISSUE: Outdoor recess at VES during freezing temps.**

**BACKGROUND:** We had a very cold snap of winter weather with temperature below 20F with wind chill in the single digits. According to employee monitor pamphlets it stats at 20 temp, recess will be indoors. As we made this decision to have indoor recess we were scrutinized because the children were indoors. We were instructed that the children needed to go outdoors because fresh air is good and as stated by Administration, the indoor air is full of "pollutants". It was also stated that children inappropriately dressed could spend recess in the cafeteria, which we were told we could not do any more because too many children were in there. Needless to say half the children are not dressed appropriately --- No gloves, hat or winter coats and "cried" to say in doors. It is very difficult for a staff of 5 to care for 200-250 children alone. It was also stated that if we weren't happy with what we were told we were easily replaceable. So in other words we are instructed to follow all rules and guidelines and then as we do we are told there is no such documentation and obviously as grown adults we are also instructed on how to dress ourselves in cold weather.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Have a supportive administration that is able to support and follow all guidelines that are used by them.

**RESOLUTION:** **There is no DoDDS standard inclement policy for all schools. VES does have an inclement weather policy—that states that students should go outside for a few minutes and if aides think it is too cold, they all come back in. The policy was advised to aides. This concern has not been brought to the SAC, but it appears that the concern may need to be explored and if a change is needed—the matter can be brought to the principal or the SAC for resolution for the 2003/04 school year.**

**ISSUE: Fire drill procedures**

BACKGROUND: I understand the importance of fire evacuations for the safety of our children, but when it happens during lunch and the cafeteria is cleared, there should be a chance for kids to return to eat warm dinners.

RECOMMENDATION: When fire alarm is heard, have someone check kitchens, cafeteria building, if clear, let children eat their lunch

**RESOLUTION: This is a great issue to present to the principal or SAC. While Mr. Vojtecky the 409<sup>th</sup> BSB SLO reviewed his record of fire drills and was not able to confirm that any were bumped into lunch hour, the issue makes sense—and should be fixed locally during the 2003/04 school year.**

**ISSUE: Children on playground on snowy, icy days**

BACKGROUND: Children were allowed to play on playground in below 20 temperatures. I was told by both of the Senior Administration that all children needed to run around and have fresh air. MY CHILD does not need to go outside, get wet and sit in class for 2 1/2 hours in wet clothes and then get sick.

RECOMMENDATION: Get leadership who care about the well being of our children and their health.

**RESOLUTION: There is no DoDDS standard inclement policy for all schools. VES does have an inclement weather policy—that states that students should go outside for a few minutes and if aides think it is too cold, they all come back in. The policy was advised to aides. This concern has not been brought to the SAC, but it appears that the concern may need to be explored and if a change is needed—the matter can be brought to the principal or the SAC for resolution for the 2003/04 school year.**

**ISSUE: Lack of discipline for students.**

**BACKGROUND:** The leadership at this school does nothing about discipline in the schools. The attitude of "lets not rock the boat while a spouse is deployed" is ridiculous. I am tired of my children being exposed to bullying, foul language and disruptive behavior in the classroom, lunchroom and playground with no accountability on the part of the students who misbehave.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Get us a Principal who won't put up with these kids and who'll make the school environment better.

**RESOLUTION:** The issue of discipline is of concern and being addressed as illustrated by the following actions: Video cameras have been ordered for the school The number of suspensions and expulsions has increased--higher than any previous year--this reflects an enforcement of the rules (but also reflects a higher than usual number of students with issues); one offshoot of the higher number of suspensions is the number of parents who feel the standards should not be enforced so much--this takes a lot of school time. The issue author shares the concerns of the school in that both are trying hard to keep a positive school environment. The drug complaint warrants a vigilant response--reported cases are dealt with immediately--any parent or student with knowledge or semi-knowledge of drugs in the school should immediately report their suspicions--these matters do get dealt with, the problem is very hard to deal with unreported cases. The ASACS substance abuse counselor is an additional resource for dealing with concerns regarding substance use/abuse.

**ISSUE: Lack of support of the current principal and vice-principal at the Vilseck Elementary School.**

BACKGROUND: Staff is rude at times due to stress of working there; many teachers and aides do not wish to return next year due to the current administration. They do not work together and it's obvious they don't care for each other. There is constant contradiction among the two. The atmosphere there is not healthy for our children. Nothing is constant there, rules change constantly, and no one wants to take responsibility for discipline. Morale there is very bad.

RECOMMENDATION: New Administration at Vilseck Elementary School.

**RESOLUTION: DoDDS has many systems in place for parents to express their concerns or make complaints ranging from verbal and written communication to principal, to comment cards mailed direct to district office. School principals have an open door policy and the District supervisor is available to visit the community to address specific issues. Each community has a School Liaison Officer (SLO) who works closely with the BSB commander, the schools and is a viable source of information and advocacy. Principals and District School Office (DSO) take quick action on complaints. The School Advisory Council (SAC) and Installation Advisory Council chaired by the BSB commander are additional vehicles for improvement suggestions. Unfortunately, none of the issues brought forward were raised at a SAC for possible resolution prior to the issue or concerns escalating**

**ISSUE: Vilseck E. School.**

**BACKGROUND:** I am an employee at the elementary school. I have been for the past 3 1/2 years. I don't want to cause trouble, but the school is a mess. As an aide, and I speak for the majority of us, most days we'd like to quit, we do not get support from administration. All of our suggestions are ignored, yet when something happens we get blamed. Many aides have left due to our treatment, the way we are spoken to, ignored and generally treated as children. Because I work there I hear a lot, many concerned parents are willing to do whatever it takes to make some changes, as soon as possible to make a better school for our kids. We are worried that good teachers will leave as well because of the lack of support by the administration. We know that (or I should say, have heard) that administration, have been moved from various schools in the past. I know that it is possible to replace them. It was just done in Bamberg recently at the H.S. and done quickly. This may not be the avenue we need to take --- (There is quite a large group of unhappy parents) but we thought we'd give it a try. I wanted to give my name but I'm concerned about working there. If you have response you could direct it to the VES PTSA and we'll get the info. Thanks!

**RECOMMENDATION:** See Background

**RESOLUTION:** While this issue is of great concern the issues expressed are not necessarily reflected in the results of meetings with aides and exit/end of year interviews with teachers. While all concerns are heard respectfully and taken seriously, "hearing" that an administrator was "not wanted" is not necessarily documentation of fact. Again, this type of issue will be best resolved if brought forward through the DSO and other systems in place to resolve parent and staff concerns. The issues will be brought forward to the School District for consideration.

**ISSUE: Vilseck middle school and high school administration and faculty members.**

**BACKGROUND:** Over the past 4 years there has been alarming numbers of physical encounters (fighting) alcohol and drugs on school grounds during the school period, six during school, in bathrooms and locker rooms, extremely vulgar language, gangs and more. There is a dress code, which states very clearly what is appropriate and what is not. There is total lack of respect from student to teachers and vice versus. There are known incidents of sexual harassment from teacher to students, which have been filed and documented. The school grounds are filthy. I have personally seen fights erupt in the halls and the teacher walk back into the rooms because they don't want to get involved.

**RECOMMENDATION:** I feel that we need: 1. A strong respected administration that is willing to do whatever is necessary to get these young adults in control  
2. I would suggest video cameras in halls and in all areas that are allowed to be videotaped. 3. The dress code must be upheld and supported by all admin and faculty, and 4. We need to build a positive environment for these students to academically and socially succeed.

**RESOLUTION:** DoDDS has many systems in place for parents to express their concerns or make complaints ranging from verbal and written communication to principal, to comment cards mailed direct to district office. School principals have an open door policy and the District supervisor is available to visit the community to address specific issues. Each community has a School Liaison Officer (SLO) who works closely with the BSB commander, the schools and is a viable source of information and advocacy. Principals and District School Office (DSO) take quick action on complaints. The School Advisory Council (SAC) and Installation Advisory Council chaired by the BSB commander are additional vehicles for improvement suggestions. Unfortunately, none of the issues brought forward were raised at a SAC for possible resolution prior to the issue or concerns escalating.

## **ISSUE: Lack of direction at the elementary school**

**BACKGROUND:** As a member of this community for 3 years, I have been aware of the mood of the elementary school. There is no concern for child safety, during lunch hour, many times there are more children than 4 or 5 adults can handle, especially with some of the behavior problems there that are ignored. Concerns are brought up to the administration, which are ignored constantly. The teacher should want to be there for our children, yet many seem to not care due to the present administration, our children can sense that teachers are unhappy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Replacing the present administration at Vilseck Elem. School

**RESOLUTION:** DoDDS has many systems in place for parents to express their concerns or make complaints ranging from verbal and written communication to principal, to comment cards mailed direct to district office. School principals have an open door policy and the District supervisor is available to visit the community to address specific issues. Each community has a School Liaison Officer (SLO) who works closely with the BSB commander, the schools and is a viable source of information and advocacy. Principals and District School Office (DSO) take quick action on complaints. The School Advisory Council (SAC) and Installation Advisory Council chaired by the BSB commander are additional vehicles for improvement suggestions. Unfortunately, none of the issues brought forward were raised at a SAC for possible resolution prior to the issue or concerns escalating



**ISSUE: The total lack of support, leadership, mentoring, respect or concern for students and faculty by Administration**

**BACKGROUND:** As an active parent in this school the past four years, I am ashamed at how it is run. Our administrative duo gives nothing to it, students or staff. We have severe problems with behavior, swearing, physical encounters between children and respect. The lunchroom is atrocious!! I have watched the monitors attempt to keep control, keep the noise levels down and the children under control with Administration walking between tables with no help at all. I have heard talk from the office personnel of conversations with Administration that are truly unprofessional and unethical. The administration shows no respect for their faculty. They do not support them in any way. We have one individual in our school, a counselor, whom the children respect and adore and now Administration have forbid this wonderful person from assisting where he is badly needed. He is the one person the children love to have around them!

**RECOMMENDATION:** Please help! This administration has to be stopped and removed to improve this school. The rules and regulations that they boast about need to be enforced when they are now the ones that will not do it. Lets put a good solid environment for a great education before these children. They deserve it

**RESOLUTION:** While this issue is of great concern, the issues expressed are not necessarily reflected in the results of meetings with aides and exit/end of year interviews with teachers. While all concerns are heard respectfully and taken seriously, “hearing” talk from others is not necessarily documentation of fact. Again, this type of issue will be best resolved if brought forward through the DSO and other systems in place to resolve parent and staff concerns. The issues will be brought forward to the School District for consideration.

**ISSUE: Leadership does not support staff at the elementary school**

BACKGROUND: Too many teachers in the past five years have left due to Administration. Do you find it acceptable that we are losing good staff year after year? How many more do we have to lose before something is done?

RECOMMENDATION: Replace Administration now!

**RESOLUTION: While this issue is of great concern the issues expressed are not necessarily reflected in the results of meetings with aides and exit/end of year interviews with teachers. This type of issue will be best resolved if brought forward through the DSO and other systems in place to resolve parent and staff concerns. The issues will be brought forward to the School District for consideration**

**ISSUE: School morale at VES - teachers, staff, morale is low. No support from administration - many teachers possibly leaving due to administration.**

BACKGROUND: The morale of the teachers at VES is very low; there is not much concern on teacher's part what goes on in and out of classroom. Staff is not happy with administration and it reflects in their teaching and support of just about anything that goes on there. Instructional aides are badgered and told one thing one day and another thing another day. Absolutely no support when problems arise. Just treated very rude. Many Aides have quit due to such treatment. Many valuable people have been lost and will continue to be lost if something isn't done right away.

RECOMMENDATION: Removing the Administration from the Elementary school.

**RESOLUTION: While this issue is of great concern the issues expressed are not necessarily reflected in the results of meetings with aides and exit/end of year interviews with teachers. This type of issue will be best resolved if brought forward through the DSO and other systems in place to resolve parent and staff concerns. The issues will be brought forward to the School District for consideration.**

## **ISSUE: Administration**

**BACKGROUND:** The parents requested school uniforms for next year. It was put to a vote - overwhelmingly FOR uniforms. We never had Administration's support. If administration cannot stand up and supports the parents at their school - they need to be replaced with someone who will.

**RECOMMENDATION:** New Administration who cares for what their parents want to happen in the school

**RESOLUTION:** About half the VES parents responded to a survey about school uniforms. 2/3 of those who responded said they would be in favor. So about a third of the school population said they would be interested in uniforms. That leaves 2/3 who didn't respond or don't care. This is a tough call for a principal in terms of determining if parents/teachers in favor of school uniforms and will they support it? The result has been that the school administration and some involved parents are trying in the upcoming school year--to have parents voluntarily comply with a suggested dress code. This seems like a workable solution. The issue of uniforms can be re-looked in the coming school year, as well, via a survey or through the SAC.



# CONSUMER SERVICES

100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (ASG)  
Grafenwoehr/Hohenfels/Vilseck, Germany

### **ISSUE: Lack of Maternity Clothes**

**BACKGROUND:** When I was pregnant I was appalled at the choice of maternity clothes at the PXs. There were few choices and most of the time the clothing that was available was horrible. I remember speaking to a manager about the selection but nothing came about. I had never seen such an awful choice of print and coloring. Most of the clothing had huge flower prints with neon colors (bright orange and pea green)! The maternity undergarments were just as bad – one rack of underwear but no bras or nursing bras. AAFES is making a huge mistake. There are a lot of pregnant women around who now are shopping online or on the economy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Change the person(s) who orders the merchandise or change that AAFES purchase the merchandise from. I know there is limited space but does AAFES really need thirty something juniors racks and only one or two maternity?

**RESOLUTION:** Our maternity department is limited but we have informed the buyers of your concerns. We should see an increase in this category in the upcoming season.

### **ISSUE: AAFES merchandising**

**BACKGROUND:** 409th PX's need to order more boys clothes - Infant to 18! There is always at least twice as much girl's clothes than boys - ALWAYS! Believe it or not AAFES there are just as many boys as girls! I've mentioned this to the reorder associate at the Vilseck PX in the past but he said he wasn't allowed to order more.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Order more boys clothing - even if it means downsizing the girls clothes section!

**RESOLUTION:** The Headquarters' buyers were here in May and we have advised them of your concerns. Based on clothing sales determines the amount of Boys vs. Girls are bought for each

## **ISSUE: Customer service at AAFES Facilities**

**BACKGROUND:** At many occasions have been to an AAFES facility and have either had the sales associate be rude or act like I was doing them a favor by coming to them. I have seen the AAFES customer service training and it was a joke! They show films from 15 years ago and start the training with “ these films are really but we have to show them”. I took this training less than two years ago here at the Vilseck PX. Also how can sales associates give good customer service when management doesn’t? I went to one of the main managers and asked a VCC question, he laughed at me and turned around. At another time I went to him again about an FRG issue and he said, “FRGs are a waste of time”. I wonder if I was a BSB Commander’s wife if he would have said that to me? Again, customer service begins at the top. If there is none there – do we really expect there to be at the sales associate level? By the way, I have filled out a comment card on this before.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Get some real professional customer service personnel to come in and train, beginning with the upper management level. Remind the upper management of the customer service #1 rule “Customer is always right”. I doubt they’ve heard it before and truly understand what it means.

**RESOLUTION:** **If you have individuals who are rude, you should talk to the manager. All associates are trained on dealing with customers. We have one of the most aggressive training programs in Vilseck and Graf. Once in a while this will occur but it will be rectified on the spot if you bring it to the manager’s attention.**

**ISSUE: AAFES doesn't serve the best interests of local communities or the Army generally; instead it serves its own interests, which are not aligned with those of soldiers and their families.**

BACKGROUND: Hiring an employment: AAFES abuses its power as one of the very few employment options on foreign posts. Pay is very low, as is morale among employees. Training is inadequate, and management gets away with practices that would face legal challenges stateside (keeping hours and benefits just below full-time, very long stretches with no days off, understaffing that results in poor service and safety).

Sales and promotion: AAFES gouges for certain items, especially convenience items: water and soda. Although the Army shouldn't encourage soda consumption, it is unethical to abuse their monopoly position. Further, it is very destructive to encourage young soldiers to buy consumer electronics at the Power Zone when many of them have no financial experience/savings/etc.

RECOMMENDATION: Hiring: AAFES' entire management should reflect the fact that AAFES is here to serve, not to monopolize and abuse. Because family members have little choice at many installations, AAFES is not authorized to capitalize unfairly on that labor pool. Besides, customers (soldiers and families) aren't served well by unhappy AAFES employees.

Sales: Soldiers should be encouraged to FIRST manage their money, and then spend wisely. Instead, advertisements at the movies, for example, encourage them to spend money on consumer electronics with no regard for their financial well-being. Again, does promoting AAFES' monopoly really help the soldier? Or does it help AAFES?

Purpose: A policy that truly helps the soldier and family needs to be implemented from the highest levels of management on down. AAFES cannot have the goals of a for-profit chain, because its true purpose is to make Army life better for individual soldiers and families.



**RESOLUTION: Employment-**All associates are trained on the art of customer service, do the right thing, and the 10' foot rule that is programs developed to give the best customer service available. Surveys are done on wages to determine the amount of pay for each job. These are reviewed yearly.

Sales-surveys are done yearly to determine our pricing strategy. We are 30% below on average across the board. AAFES is a Non-Appropriated fund activity, which gives their profits back to the community via MWR. Last year AAFES gave 241 million dollars.

**ISSUE: My problem is concerning AAFES. They lack customer service at the Vilseck Main Exchange and Management does not inform employees of specials that the store has.**

**BACKGROUND:** On more than 4 occasions the cashiers have been extremely rude. During the months of November and December the Main PX, Pxtra and Power Zone have double coupon days on Mondays. The cashiers that I went to on 4 occasions had no idea about the promotion. One of the employees was a supervisor at Pxtra. The cashiers are not friendly and act as if they do not want to work at the Main PX. AAFES also needs to do a better job regarding their layaway service.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Management needs to do a better job-hiring people and afterwards they need to be trained on how to perform excellent customer service. I recommend that for larger purchases the time should be longer for having an item on layaway. For example, for a large purchase that totals \$500 or higher the layaway time period should be over 45 days.

**RESOLUTION:** If you have individuals who are rude, you should talk to the manager. All associates are trained on dealing with customers. We have one of the most aggressive training programs in Vilseck and Graf. Layaways are 90 days for items over \$200.00, unless it is clothing and computers. This is based on industry standard.

**ISSUE: AAFES employees and how rude they are.**

BACKGROUND: It seems that they know we have no other place to shop so they can act anyway. This happens most at the 24hr. Shoppette.

RECOMMENDATION: Give classes on how to treat people.

**RESOLUTION: If you have individuals who are rude, you should talk to the manager. All associates are trained on dealing with customers. We have one of the most aggressive training programs in Vilseck and Graf. Once in a while this will occur but it will be rectified on the spot if you bring it to the manager's attention.**

**ISSUE: AAFES facilities on post**

**BACKGROUND:** It always seems that there are less people working at lunch and dinnertime than any other time of the day. At 1300 there will be four people a teach food court place, Shoppette, customer service, cash cage or Burger King, but then at 1200 or 1800, there is usually one and if we're lucky, there's two.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Have managers ensure that all breaks are taken at other times rather than peak hours. I'm sure this is the intent, however, there must be ways to enforce these policies!

**RESOLUTION:** We staff all areas based on peak hours. We use management systems that actually do the work for us and we review them weekly.

**ISSUE: Cannot get lunch at the food court during the lunch hour when there is PLDC**

**BACKGROUND:** see issue

**RECOMMENDATION:** Make the soldiers go to the dining facility

**RESOLUTION:** AAFES is here to serve the military soldier first. We should be happy to wait until our soldier gets served before we complain about lines.

**ISSUE: Having small little air tanks at the Shoppette to fill up tires**

**BACKGROUND:** You go to the Shoppette to put air in your tires and they have small portable tanks. Half the time you make two or three trips to recharge the tank. Other times, the tank does not work, or are not out to use.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Put a long hose on the outlet with a handle, like they use at the Auto Craft store.

**RESOLUTION:** **This is based on the German rule and we cannot deviate**

**ISSUE: Ready to give up trying for employment at the PX**

**BACKGROUND:** I am a 22-year-old British citizen married to a soldier, trying for employment at the PX since May 2002. The lady who works at the Human Resource Center doesn't know her job very well. After constant revisits, resistance and a lot of patience, I am no farther than when I started 8 months ago. I did everything in my power to land one interview, which I made happen. There are openings available, even now, but she never submits my application. Her reason being I don't qualify for she'll hit me with another local national requirement. I have spoke to many employees of the PX and even the manager, and they see no reason for me not being employed there. I feel totally discriminated against. This letter is my last resort because I have done everything possible on my behalf. I just wish she would too. Please help!

**RECOMMENDATION:** I have no idea. I have been trying to solve this for 8 months and no one seems to care.

**RESOLUTION:** **We are in a hiring freeze at this time due to deployment. There are vacancies but they are not being filled at this time. We have the new hiring system on line at [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com). So please go to this site or stop by one of our HR offices so they can assist you.**

**ISSUE: Gas coupons for ESSO or BP on Autobahn only**

BACKGROUND: ESSOs are getting harder to find even with the help of the ESSO map. Many have closed, changed to another gas station or are off the beaten path. There are also many stretches of autobahn where you can find neither an ESSO nor a BP. Gas is very expensive on the economy.

RECOMMENDATION: At a minimum, redo the ESSO maps to update current locations...and to include BP's on the autobahn. Negotiate the use of coupons at another company, at least along the autobahn, like Aral – they're everywhere.

**RESOLUTION: AAFES has recently been working with the ARAL station to allow the use of coupons. The decision should be forthcoming in the very near future. Once this agreement has been reached a new map will be initiated to include both ESSO, BP, and ARAL.**

**ISSUE: Purchasing other countries' (Italy, Great Britain) gas coupons prior to travel to that country.**

BACKGROUND: Being able to pre-purchase coupons prior to traveling would help us save money on trips. Many times traveling to Italy you will not pass through a military installation where you can buy coupons. Coupons are a great benefit we enjoy and it would be an added and well-deserved benefit if we could use them on our vacation. Great Britain coupons are unavailable to anyone not stationed there, yet they can purchase Germany and Italy coupons. That needs to be reciprocated.

RECOMMENDATION: Have coupons available at the PX to purchase for all of the countries or have a way to mail order them. Allow traveling military and family to purchase Great Britain coupons.

**RESOLUTION: Good recommendation, this would make travel easier for many of us. However, to make it happen, USAREUR would have to table the discussion to change the SOFA. Please resubmit your issue in the next AFAP to continue to stress its importance.**



## **ISSUE: Drive thru at Burger King**

**BACKGROUND:** I recently used the Burger King drive thru during lunch. It took me 30 minutes to place my order and receive my meal. I do not think this was the purpose of a drive thru. The soldiers who are on a quick lunch do not have 30 minutes to sit in drive thru to wait for their meals, and there were plenty in line that I noticed. I have worked for fast food restaurants in the past and they all believed in a 30 second drive thru. And believe me, this 30 [minute] service does not work. Drive thru has priority over those walking into the driving room. This should also apply to Burger King throughout AAFES.

**RECOMMENDATION:** There are 2 windows in drive thru. The first is for the placement of your order and money pick-up, the second for the purchase pick-up. Why not use both of them instead of just one. Please see if this can be changed. Our soldiers today do not need to be wasting their precious time sitting in a drive thru waiting on their meals.

**RESOLUTION:** **Burger King has mystery shoppers checking this very same thing. We have received a 100% on these and if by chance the customer waited that long it is out of the ordinary. From the time you place your order until you receive your order it should be accomplished in less than 5 minutes.**

**ISSUE: The Hohenfels Movie Theater as well as many other movie theaters in USAREUR.**

**BACKGROUND:** The movie theater in Hohenfels is not up to standards. Many seats are broken and the concession stand is in the back. This makes it hard to hear the movie once the movie has started. People are getting up talking and buying food in an open area room. The speakers are also outdated. This makes it hard for new movies filmed in Digital Sound to have clear quality sound. Better advertisement people don't know what is playing.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Remodel the theater perhaps making two new screens. Bring in new theater seating and surround sound, upgrade the movie projector. If AAFES spends the money on developing this new theater more families and soldiers will spend money. Also create better advertisement. Hire an AAFES theater manager to run the 100 ASG movie theaters.

**RESOLUTION:** This is a good suggestion. We will look at designing a project and attempt to get the funds to do so.

**ISSUE: Movie Theater always shows kids movies in the middle of the week**

**BACKGROUND:** Kids movies shown at 7:30 pm on school nights. Since we don't get a lot of kid's movies, it's hard to keep kids up late on school nights. I have a two and five year old and to get out of a movie at 2130 on a school night is too late.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Show kids movies on 1 or 2 Saturdays a month. (At previous post, 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month was always a kid's movie at 2pm, regular movie in the evening.) I think this would be a viable option for both parents and AAFES. I think attendance would rise also.

**RESOLUTION:** We do have better turn out during the week for kid's movies. What we will do is run an extra movie for 40 or more. We have done this for the Girl Scouts, Church groups, CYS, and military units. We also have a birthday party program. Your AAFES theater team is here to serve but it must generate enough revenue to cover our manpower requirements.

**ISSUE: Hohenfels PX and Car Care Center inadequate for the post.**

**BACKGROUND:** The detail of the problem is that the Hohenfels PX and Car Care Center (Gas Station) are not adequate for this post. The sizes of both are too small, and the hours are too short. This issue has been raised before, and the standard answer is that the post is too small and the population too few to warrant the expenditures for AAFES. If research were done on sales and the community alone, this would not be an issue. Hohenfels PX and Gas Station account for at the minimum of 85-90% of revenue for the post and with constant rotations and MRE's, these venues make more than enough to warrant renovations to both facilities.

In comparison to other post, Hohenfels is small for the actual on post acreage. What Hohenfels does offer in contract to other post' is local availability because of smaller acreage. With 700 plus soldiers stationed just 2.3 miles away, the 1/4 Infantry Regiment (OPFOR) provides AAFES with constant business, and the Hohenfels community; to include 282 BSB, A. Co. 94th Engineers, and HHC CMTC; has always been a mainstay for AAFES facilities. Dependents provide ample business for the facilities also. There are over 1300 soldiers and civilians on Hohenfels at any given time; and with rotations and MRE's, there is at a minimum 2500 soldiers and civilians on the post at any given time. The Power Zone is sorely lacking on selection and availability of times other post take for granted and with Hohenfels being so far away from them, it is very inconvenient; to say the last; to drive to the nearest post; which is Vilseck; just to get basic items that the PX advertises but does not carry. These are things that happen on a regular basis. The PX loses business because of this practice of "ignoring" the Hohenfels community in the regards of selection, and the residents and soldiers take it for granted that the PX will not have it and on the first available time off; which does not come often; travel to Vilseck or further, just to get the basic items or the new release of movies, music, advertised items and more.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The problem can be solved by expanding the PX and Gas Station and offering more items like the other post do. The Gas station should carry more items and be renovated for a more appealing look. It at least two decision makers would look at Vilseck or other post, then looked at Hohenfels, I am confident they would not come to decisions that have been made in the past. Surveys should be taken and research should be

made in these areas that have been mentioned above. Hohenfels deserves these changes as we in the community; military and civilians alike; work hard to train USAREUR's forces to be battle ready. It is known from the top down that CMTC brings great credit on the 7th ATC and all Army forces in Europe. With the situation of the world, the operation tempo is only going to increase and bring more soldiers to train on Hohenfels, so please revisit this issue as the lack of action only brings morale and community spirit down as we feel like we are being overlooked and treated like "far away step-children", while renovation and growth resources are spent on other post constantly.

**RESOLUTION:** We have recently looked at expanding the PX and a project has been identified. The Gas Station has limited space to expand and currently has no intention of being enlarged. A new traffic pattern would help ease the congestion (DPW). In reference to the comment that AAFES ignores Hohenfels is untrue. All AAFES customers are important and we will make every effort to get sale items from other stores. We have added some Power Zone items that are featured in the sales flyer and have had success. It is impossible to carry every sales item with the limited space. Our BOD must approve all projects and certain criteria needs to be accessed prior to any approvals.

**ISSUE: Support for family finances in the community through double coupons day. I feel this should be done on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to help the soldier, civilians and families who use the PX and Commissary.**

**BACKGROUND:** The PX occasionally has Double Coupon Days and the Commissary never has Double Coupon Days. When the PX does offer these days, they are well used and the community is excited about this service. This could be held USAREUR wide.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Establish weekly Double Coupon Days at the PX and/or Commissary. Consider doing this on typical slow days, maybe Tuesdays or Wednesdays. It would enable the community, including soldiers, civilians and families to save money and could possibly increase PX and Commissary revenue. I work at Army Community Service Building in Grafenwoehr. I am the Relocation Program Specialist and I see people on a daily basis asking for information on Double Coupon Days at the Commissary and PX. The coupons could be picked up from the ACS in either Vilseck or Graf.

**RESOLUTION: Your recommendation will be taken under advisement. We do not do these promotions on a regular basis but will consider them in the future.**

**ISSUE:** Carry more health products in the commissary. In this community we are bombarded with commercial on AFN about healthy eating yet I cannot buy a loaf of whole wheat bread in the commissary.

**BACKGROUND:** My main concern is here and throughout USAREUR is low salt products. I know that many in our community have high blood pressure yet I find very few low salt products in commissary. I know that in the grocery stores in the states I can get canned vegetables, canned tomatoes, cheese and many other products that are low or now salt, however these do not seem to be available here. I have to search the shelves and read a lot of labels to find products I can use.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Carry and advertise more of the healthy products. Explore what products come in a low-sodium variety and stock them, as well as more whole-wheat products.

**RESOLUTION:** The commissary carries a large selection of healthy products throughout the entire store and the buyers at our Region office are constantly soliciting industry for better, healthier products. Many items are offered in low-fat versions of their counterparts. If there is a particular item that the patron is searching for, the patron communication form or special item request form is a great tool. By the way, the Vilseck commissary currently carries 4 types of Wheat bread: Light Wheat, 100% Wheat, Country Hearth Wheat, and Pillsbury Wheat Bread. In addition, the Whole Grain, 12 Grain, Potato, Milton's, Honey Nut, Light White, School Bus Low Fat, and Jewish Rye all are great healthy alternatives to your regular white flour bread.

## **ISSUE: The commissary baggers and shopping carts**

**BACKGROUND:** I went in to pick up my WIC items than I have don't have to pay for, of course! The bagger bagged the stuff but didn't want to walk out to the vehicle like they usually would (no! Don't worry I didn't go on the express land). But, the problem is I had 3 bags and my child and I wasn't supposed to take the shopping cart outside! That's a bunch of crock. A shopping cart is made for that purpose. The commissary needs to change that rule because the baggers aren't doing what they're there for!!! And I don't have time in my schedule to be going back and forth with a shopping cart!

**RECOMMENDATION:** Let me take my own groceries to my vehicle! It should be my choice - not the commissaries! Make the "hard workers" at the commissary retrieve shopping carts that are outside like most stores do it!!! Every hour to 1/2 hour. Make shopping cart parking spaces please!!! Hire a shopping cart retriever!

**RESOLUTION:** The baggers, who are not employees of the commissary, are there to provide added customer service to the patron by bagging and transporting the groceries to the vehicle. The bagger performs this service in the hope that the patron will tip them as acknowledgement to that service. The patron is under no obligation to offer the bagger a tip. The patron can direct how they would like their groceries bagged and can also, if they wish, transport their own groceries to their vehicle. The patron cannot, however, use the baggers carts. The bagger carts are only to be used by trained baggers and is part of their work equipment. If the patron wants to bring their own groceries to their vehicle, the bagger will gladly transfer the groceries to a shopping cart and let the patron use that cart. If the patron is dissatisfied with the service of a bagger then we encourage them to talk to the head bagger or to one of our managers.

We do have baggers that continuously sweep the parking lot for stray carts. The problem occurs when patrons decide to take the carts all the way home to the housing and dormitory areas. The shopping carts are very expensive and sturdy, but they are not designed for long hauls across the installations.



**ISSUE: Commissary not having private label groceries especially European commissaries.**

BACKGROUND: I've always tried to save money when I'm shopping. So often I buy the private label items in a store. Many times the private label is just the same as the name brand the only difference is the price. Most of the time you can buy a private label item for less than you would buy a name brand item with a coupon. It is a disservice not to give us the option of buying private label items at the commissaries and PX! I know there are a few items you can find on military bases that are private label but there needs to be a whole line. There needs to be a better selection.

RECOMMENDATION: Get into contact with the companies that supply Wal-Mart, Kmart and grocery stores around the county with their private label products. Find a company to start working with AAFES to supply the stores with the option of saving money.

**RESOLUTION: On the subject of "Private Label", we (DeCA) are in the business of purchasing grocery and household items like those sold in commercial supermarkets. Not stocked are private label products and manufacturers' third-label lines. We tend to go with "national brands" that satisfy a recognized or anticipated customer preference. As the customer comments, many times these items are produced by the same companies that produce the national brands, however we can not guarantee this. Believe me, even when they do get packed by the same canners/packageers, the name might be the same but the quality of product inevitably isn't. In lieu of private label, we do offer our BVI program which identifies the best deal in a particular item of a particular size within our stores (i.e. the best value 20 count garbage bag).**

**ISSUE: The commissary (ies) is not open for unlimited shopping before 11am on weekdays.**

BACKGROUND: Current Vilseck and Graf Commissary opening hours are not meeting the need of the vast majority of families. Currently, commissaries open at 0930-1100 for limited shopping (15 items or less) only. Unlimited shopping does not begin until 1100. This is extremely inconvenient for families who have children. Children are dropped off at school at approx 0800-0830. At 1100 many parents pick up children at school (preschool) and/or are preparing lunch for small children. After this, small children have nap times, which do not allow parents to leave the house to do food shopping. At 1430 school age children are arriving home and it is time for homework and other after school activities. At 1600, parents are preparing the evening meal. The only convenient time to do market shopping is between the hours of 0800 and 1100.

RECOMMENDATION: Commissaries open at 800 (0900 the latest) ONE workday per week to allow families unlimited shopping. Note: A community survey was conducted to establish whether or not support exists for extended Commissary operations. 93 signatures were included stating, "The undersigned agree that opening Vilseck or Grafenwoehr commissaries at 8am one day per week, unlimited shopping, would help families who have young children.

**RESOLUTION: The new Store Director for Vilseck and Grafenwoehr is currently evaluating the hours that the commissaries are open. He has already made the change whereby the Grafenwoehr commissary will now be open on all Local National Holidays. What he envisions is that the stores will open one hour later during the week but open with full service for all shoppers, doing away with the early bird shopping. Those extra hours saved will be transferred to the weekend and the commissary will open up hour earlier on Saturdays and Sundays. The change in hours is based primarily on meeting the needs of our community and good business practice.**

**ISSUE: Post weight gym closing on Training Holidays or closing early.**

BACKGROUND: My husband (active duty) and I work out at the weight gym regularly. When there is a Training Holiday the gym is either closed or closes at 1500. This is the time that my husband and I work out together because he is off, but by the time we do whatever we have to during the day and then go to the gym, it would be closed or closing up.

RECOMMENDATION: Training holidays are for active duty members. All of the staff at the gym is civilians so why would they have a training holiday? The weight gym should have special hours for those times, at least until 1800. The gym should maintain normal business hours (i.e. 0600-2000 for basketball gym and 0600-2100 for fitness center) on training holidays

**RESOLUTION: Thank you very much for your suggestion on how we may improve the hours of our sports and fitness facilities. Based on your suggestion, along with those of several other patrons, our Sports Branch personnel reviewed the facilities' hours and have adjusted them to better meet our customers' needs. Beginning 5 May 03, the operational hours are now:**

**Olympia Fitness Center**

**Monday - Friday – 0600-2100 hrs.**

**Saturday, Sunday, Federal/Training Holidays – 1000 -1900 hrs.**

**Post Gym**

**Monday – Friday – 1130-1930 hrs.**

**Saturday, Sunday, Federal/Training Holidays – 1100-1700 hrs.**

**We hope that these new hours better serve your needs.**

**ISSUE: Hohenfels gym. Hours open are too few and equipment is less than adequate.**

**BACKGROUND:** there are not enough locks for the locker rooms and exercise equipment remains broken for weeks at a time.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Make sure there are enough padlocks for EVERY locker in the locker room. Not everyone is honest. Ensure the gym staff follows up on work orders for treadmills and exercise equipment. Get rid of equipment no one uses and bring in more treadmills and elliptical exercisers – too much space is wasted on outdated stuff!

**RESOLUTION:** Both the Post Gym and Olympia Fitness Center normally have sufficient padlocks available to meet the needs of our customers. However this apparently was not the case in your situation. We're sorry you were inconvenienced by the momentary shortage of this service and we will do our best to ensure it doesn't happen again.

**ISSUE: Gyms in the 409th**

BACKGROUND: Not enough hours of operation

RECOMMENDATION: Either hire more or place soldiers there that cannot work duties or in MOS.

**RESOLUTION: Gym staff is understaffed according to DA MWR Baseline Standards by 12 positions. The Gym will offer extended hours when sufficient staffing authorizations are granted. Extended hours could also be granted if local units could provide consistent and long-term Borrowed Military Manpower (BMM).**

**ISSUE: Library needs to be open longer hours (Grafenwoehr and Vilseck)**

BACKGROUND: The library hours are not very patron friendly. They are closed every Friday, on which Training Holidays usually fall, and the hours they are open aren't very long.

RECOMMENDATION: Please open earlier in the morning and/or stay open later at night and on Fridays (choose a different day to be closed).

**RESOLUTION: Vilseck Library hours will be adjusted in the very near future to be open on Fridays and be closed on another weekday, however the amount of weekly operational hours will not be changed due to staffing requirements. Both libraries are understaffed according to DA MWR Baseline Standards. As soon as we receive adequate staffing authorizations we will expand hours.**

**ISSUE: The Graf library only allows 5 inter-loan library books at a time!**

BACKGROUND: Graf library states that you can only put 5 books on interlibrary loan hold form! Once you get your books, any where from a week to a month or more, you can't put any more books on interlibrary loan until you have returned the books. The Graf library does have a big selection for most topics! This makes it hard to do college research papers. There is no way you can do 3 research papers if the library doesn't have the books you need. You have use interlibrary loan.

RECOMMENDATION: The interlibrary loan should not have a limit of 5 books. There shouldn't be a limit at all. If there must be a limit 15 books is a good limit. Problem can be solved by contacting the lady in charge of the library and tell her to change her policy on interlibrary loan books.

**RESOLUTION: The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Libraries try to offer a wide selection of books with 38,000 items in the Graf library and 40,000 items in the Vilseck Library. Both communities have Internet research capability. Interlibrary loan items are time consuming to process. Although our libraries are understaffed, we will modify our current SOP's to increase the interlibrary loans from 5 to 15 for educational and research purpose only.**

**ISSUE:** Lack of a sit down and order restaurant except Tumbleweed on post. Plus no place to order breakfast, etc on the weekends, or holiday brunches.

**BACKGROUND:** We have plenty of fast food, but nowhere to take a date or a family except Tumbleweed. The service is extremely poor there, the food pricey for the quality, and not made properly to be termed "Mexican". They don't serve breakfast and there's never a holiday brunch on Sunday.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Why can't we make an all service members' club that serves three meals daily - including a breakfast meal to order even on the weekends? It would [be] nice also for the community to have a restaurant that served brunch on Sunday - like a Mother's Day brunch, or food brunches that serves breakfast food as well as a theme like German or Italian.

**RESOLUTION:** New construction is not an option, it would require approval from DA and the entire process would take approximately 3-5 years or more. Currently, there are plans to move Yesterday's Night Club to the Langenbruck Center, which would free up its current location in building 227. Future plans for building 227 would make it possible to offer the kinds of events suggested.



## **ISSUE: Family Night Buffet at the Great Escape**

**BACKGROUND:** At a previous station, Tuesday nights was a family night Italian buffet for \$5ish and kids under 5 eat free. They showed Disney movies and had a clown blowing up balloons and treats for the kids. This is a great night out for moms when the dads are in the box. Kids get to play and moms have some adult company.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Establish this at the Great Escape. They seem to forget there are 472 elementary school students and who knows how many under 5 years olds. I personally have never been in the Great Escape. You hear so many bad things about it, why go? But I believe something like that could get me, plus other moms, into the Great Escape.

**RESOLUTION:** This is an outstanding idea and the Great Escape will be planning an activity of this type in the near future. To ensure success, we will establish a reservation cut-off date and a minimum number of attendees to conduct the event. If we have the customer demand, this can become an established event.

**ISSUE: There is no place to go play pool on post.**

BACKGROUND: There is no place to go to strictly play pool. That is open at regular hours and can be family oriented for family members.

RECOMMENDATION: Designate a building and make a good pool hall.

**RESOLUTION: The Gettysburg Club opens at 1100 and has two ARMP pool tables for use. Cost is .75 per game. The Grafenwoehr Bowling Center opens at 1100 and also has an ARMP pool table for the same price.**

**ISSUE: No indoor swimming pool at Graf or Vilseck.**

BACKGROUND: Korea has indoor swimming pools for less than \$1 mil each at many camps. Graf EBE swimming pool cost estimate is \$10-20 mil and way too high! Get pools like Korea Camp Walker has or Camp Carroll hooked onto existing gym. Annual maintenance cost is under \$30K per year.

RECOMMENDATION: Quit trying for a large new project and add onto a gym side indoor pool like Korea DPW did. Get a copy of their blueprints and see. Saying use Graf outdoor or indoor at Amberg, Weiden or Eschenbach is not a good reason. Let's help the kids swim here all week. German pools are not close if you have young kids and no car! Be nice and try to help get both an indoor pool at Graf & Vilseck.

**RESOLUTION: Swimming pool operations are very costly and not cost effective when considering start-up costs; maintenance costs, staffing costs versus potential income. There are many indoor and outdoor pools within 30 minutes driving distance to Grafenwoehr or Vilseck. There are two military communities with indoor pools in USAREUR, Baumholder and Vicenza and both communities experience financial hardships on the upkeep of their pools. In Korea, the majority of employees that operate and maintain the pool operations are local nationals, who are funded completely by the Korean government with no cost to the installation.**

## **ISSUE: Lack of activities for soldiers with financial hardships**

**BACKGROUND:** There are soldiers who sit up in their rooms with nothing to do because they can barely afford essential items like hygiene products and uniform costs. When child support, rent, car notes, etc...leave soldiers broke, they can't afford \$100 for a TV, \$50 + expenses for trips, or in some cases, even \$5 to go to Burger King with. They see co-workers going out, buying things and having fun, while they're always left behind due to lack of money. That becomes depressing. Add time to depression and you have a recipe for a less productive soldier, which can degrade the units ability to perform tasks or in extreme cases suicide from depression.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Every post I've been to have an activity center with TV's and movies, board games, video games, etc. at no charge to the soldier. One can only workout so much before they get "burnt out" of the gym. I propose that an activity center should be built. It should have at least a pool table (not a pay table), various board games and a TV/VCR with movies that can be checked out to watch should be a center on every post. Items can be accrued through donations from soldiers with a spare TV, VCR, or movies. And I'm sure most every unit would give up some money to raise the moral of soldiers with a bad set of circumstances.

**RESOLUTION:** **Langenbruck has many free activities for soldiers, TV, VCR, board games and is also the site of many AF-E shows. Both communities, Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, provide many special events, which are free to soldiers such as Asian Pacific Celebration, Family Appreciation/Community Celebration. Please pick up a free copy of the Bavarian-American Magazine each month, which lists all of the MWR activities in the 100th ASG.**

**ISSUE: Community bank debit/credit cards should be EC cards.**

**BACKGROUND:** To be able to shop on the German economy we need an EC card. Most German stores only accept EC cards and today most people rely on debit/credit cards to shop.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Work with the German banks or whatever it takes to make our cards into EC cards.

**RESOLUTION:** Forwarded to IMA level AFAP Conference, active issue

**ISSUE: The community bank's hours aren't very user friendly.**

**BACKGROUND:** The Community bank is open only during hours when everyone else is working and never on Saturdays. The hours are very inconvenient.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The bank should be open earlier in the morning and/or later in the evening. Also, it would be very helpful if they were open on Saturdays.

**RESOLUTION:** The Community Bank, although similar to commercial banks in services offered, is unique primarily due to the contractual relationship between Bank of America, N.A. as the managing bank and the Department of Defense, which governs products and services offered and banking center operating hours.

Community Bank operating hours are decided jointly with the local command and bank management. The Grafenwoehr Banking Center operating hours are currently Mo/Tu/We/Fr 09:00 - 16:00 and Th 10:00 - 17:00. Thursday's hours were changed from 11:00 - 18:00 to 10:00 - 17:00 during 1999 to better serve community needs. Additional recommendations for changes to operating hours must be requested and coordinated with the banking center manager and the local base/post commander. Once agreed, those recommendations along with supporting documentation will be forwarded to bank management and pertinent military channels for approval and implementation.

It is our goal to provide quality service to each of our customers. We appreciate the feedback and value the interest shown in our organization. Thank you again for taking the time to bring concerns to our attention. POC: Gertrud M. Phillips, Assistant Vice President and Senior Manager

**ISSUE: Community bank on line banking service needed.**

**BACKGROUND:** Not available. Deployments, dispersed families, etc, make this a necessity, not a "nice to have" feature.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Create on-line banking service.

**RESOLUTION:** **We will forward through Retail Banking to our global channel for review and evaluation. This should run parallel with 266<sup>th</sup> Finance USAREUR level.**

**ISSUE: Parking at ATM at bank in Hohenfels**

BACKGROUND: Parking for quick stops at ATM at the bank is bad because the bank employees use the 5 – 6 spots available for customers.

RECOMMENDATION: Bank employees could park in large lot just 20 – 25 feet away. Save best parking for their customers like most businesses require of their employees. Designate with a few signs “ATM only”.

**RESOLUTION: We understand occasionally the bank parking spaces immediately in front of the ATM are occupied, however, there does seem to be enough parking spaces for all customers around the bank.**



## **ISSUE: Need for drive through banking, mail pick-up**

**BACKGROUND:** As a mother of 3 with a deployed soldier I really feel the need for easier access to banking, including an easier way to pay phone bills, and an easier way to pick up mail. Each stop requires finding parking, buckling and unbuckling 3 children and then waiting in lines to accomplish simple tasks. Especially during these times of heavy deployment I believe a drive through banking and mail pick up would make mothers' burdens lighter.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Have one bank, on post, with drive through banking. This would allow banking and phone bill payment from the car. Have a drive through mail pick up for mothers and children to use. This would be especially helpful during the cold winter months and holidays. (During Christmas my postal errands required the use of 3 separate buildings!)

## **RESOLUTION:**

**CMR Response:** At the present CMR location, there is no possibility of a drive through window. This would require an overhang something similar to the APOs overhangs. The current setup of the mailroom in conjunction with the needed space around the CMR makes this idea impossible to accomplish. Currently over-hire positions are being closely looked at. This concept would require an additional fulltime employee to service this window. From a mother's viewpoint-receiving mail from a drive through is a great idea but I feel the CMR would receive many complaints from other customers if they were unable to utilize the same service. To service everyone in this manner would be impossible. As for having to utilize three buildings during Christmas, the CMR and the APO fall under two separate organizations and there is physically not enough room to combine the two. On the other hand the CMR has recently finished the setup of the Large Parcel Pickup Point in the center portion of bldg. 338. What this means to the CMR customer, there will be no more walking to the end of the building to receive large parcels during Christmas. The customer will be able to enter the Large Parcel Pick-Up Point from the CMR Lobby. They then may exit the building only ten yards from where they entered the CMR. We hope this will greatly reduce the inconvenience to the customer.

**DPW and Bank Response:** The writer's suggestion for drive-thru banking has merit and should be considered at such time as it is possible to relocate the banks in Vilseck or Grafenwoehr. This is a resource issue and must be weighed against all other needs of the community. It is unlikely to happen in the near term. Meanwhile, the suggester should talk with the Community Bank managers. There are direct payment options for things like phone bills which could eliminate having to come into the bank.

On the second issue of drive-thru mail pick-up, this is not feasible. Postal regulations prohibit postal employees from removing mail from boxes after it has been placed there. It can only be removed by the box holder. In addition, the physical layout of the Consolidated Mail Room would not allow for a drive up lane. One suggestion for mothers of small children is to come to the CMR at off-peak hours when CMR employees would have time to assist in taking packages out to patron's cars. They are more than willing to do this.

**ISSUE: Unable to receive AFN (both AM and FM) radio broadcast in our vehicle because of different radiofrequencies.**

**BACKGROUND:** The radio frequencies used locally are not the same numbers as in the States. For example - in the States, FM frequencies are odd numbered channels (103.7, 99.3 etc) but AM channels are even numbered (1000, 1340, etc).

The radio in our new US-spec car is digital and will not tune into the odd-numbered AM channels (1107, 1485) and even-number FM channels (107.7, 101.4 etc) that the local AFN broadcasts are on. With our older analog radio, it wasn't a problem but with the newer radio it is a major problem. We cannot receive AFN radio broadcasts in our car throughout much of Europe. This is also a problem with the US Army's Ford Focus TMP vehicles.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Is it possible to have the AM and FM station broadcast on different radio frequencies that are similar to US radio frequencies? Some areas do have a FM radio frequency that can be picked up with US-spec radios but no all communities do. Asking the German authorities to allow AFN broadcast on different frequencies would eliminate the problem. This problem is most prevalent in Germany, based on the American Forces Radio listings in the Stars and Stripes.

## **RESOLUTION:**

(a) An international committee, which meets about once a decade in Geneva Switzerland, allocates the radio frequencies of each country. The spacing and numbering and authorized power of countries frequencies and broadcasts have been worked out over time. Hard to believe, but true radio frequencies and broadcast power are considered national treasures and sovereign. Or to put it another way, "They're aren't a lot of them, and each one is precious." They are not something you just give away! Countries (as well as all valid license holders in a country) go to court for violations of their frequencies and prosecute to the fullest those that steal the "air waves."

(b) As it happens, and explained rather well in the issue, the United States operates it's radio signals on the even side of the AM band spaced at least 10MHz apart (710, 720, 1150, 1160, 1500 etc) while to avoid interference on a global scale, Europe's AM is on the odd side with less spacing in between (1107 and 1485 to name a couple). The system is reversed with the FM band. The US operates on the "odd point" (98.3, 106.5, 110.7 etc) where Europe is on the even side (90.0, 101.4, and 107.4) to name a few. Moreover, there in lies our situation. After the war, when the US was no longer an Army of Occupation, we asked for and were granted broadcast rights for American Forces Radio Network on frequencies owned by the German government. It was the German version of our own Federal Communications Commission that graciously granted our requests and researched each request (for every AFN affiliate in Germany) so our frequency allocation and subsequent broadcast power would not interfere with valid commercial, official German radio stations, and due to proximity, each other.

(c) The issue you raise is global and not just limited to Europe. We cannot ask the German government or anyone else for something they cannot legally provide. The frequency we ask for might belong to one of Germany's neighbors. As guests in their country, the problem and solution belong to the consumer, not our host country. As we point out in every newcomer's briefing, we suggest that you consider purchasing an aftermarket European radio or a multi-system radio that will receive both US and European stations on their frequency of assignment. That way, you will have the best of both worlds, here and around Europe.

**ISSUE: I would like to be better informed of the weather.**

**BACKGROUND:**

**RECOMMENDATION:** A two-day prediction of the local weather can run across the bottom of the TV screen, on the AFN channels, at the top of the hour. The local weather can be announced on the radio station at a certain time daily (maybe half past the hour). The weather hotline number should include the weather prediction and temperature along with the road conditions.

**RESOLUTION:**

(a) Our local weather is obtained from the 7th Weather Squadron based in Simbach, Germany and from the 7th Weather Detachment based in Grafenwoehr. These highly trained individuals primary mission is to provide current weather conditions to the pilots flying in our areas. They do forecasts for us as a matter of courtesy. Our Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the 7th Weather Squadron clearly outlines the times our broadcasters can call for updates in the current weather conditions. We call Sembach just before 5am, Monday-Friday (during the winter months and when the local weather station is not staffed), for a generalized weather forecast for the day. We call our local weather squadron, before 6am, Monday-Friday to get the local area's morning outlook and then again before 3pm, Monday-Friday getting the overnight forecast and the next day's outlook.

(b) Coupled with our local news, sports, and community updates, these weathercasts are aired at least 6 times per hour in our local radio shows (6am-9am & 3pm-6pm weekdays) on 1107 and 1485 AM and on our FM services in all our communities throughout the broadcast day. Our Disk Jockeys also do a condensed version during their "talk time" throughout their shows. The reality is, on local radio, you have an availability of local weather about every 6-10 minutes during our "drive-times" and then about once per hour on our satellite services throughout the broadcast day.

C) In other areas, we invite you to click on our web page at [www.afneurope.net/bavaria/](http://www.afneurope.net/bavaria/) where we post our radio news and weather. During inclement/severe weather, we include updates and road conditions in our scrolling banner at the top of the page, along with other emergency information you may need to get through the situation safely. To explain the phone number we post, it is not a "weather-hotline," but a "road conditions hotline" (provided by the 409th BSB-EOC) that has more details than we can post on our web site. There is no "weather hotline" per se, but the number to the 7th Weather Detachment (DSN 475-6253) is listed in the 409th BSB phone book. The 7th Weather Squadron has asked that we not publish their phone number because the number of individual phone calls would hamper/halt their primary mission of providing forecasts and current data to our pilots and aircrews.

(d) Since the return of local news to AFN Bavaria's (AFN Atlantic television signal), our news staff has included local weather as part of the nightly newscast. Our news and weather is scheduled at 5:54pm, 6:54pm, 8:55pm, 10:23pm and again the next morning in "Oprah" and the in the "Today" show to reach a variety of our audience. Along with the full newscasts, the weather/movies/exchange rates are highlighted from the newscast and are placed as commercial breaks throughout the broadcast day on all television services we provide local breaks. The network policy for running crawls at the bottom of the screen is for emergencies only. Due to the nature of the scrolling letters impact on programming, essential information is immediate to the viewer. For example, during inclement or severe weather conditions, AFN Bavaria's staff obtains the wording from the EOC's (both 409th and 282nd) and scrolls the information and contact points on all our broadcast channels continuously until the situation changes. Simultaneously, we over-ride all the local breakaway on radio and update the weather, road conditions, school closures, and late reporting every break. Airing normal weather crawls at the top of the hour would dilute the impact of our emergency announcements and possibly interfere with a force protection, weather emergency, or another vital issue that needs the immediate attention of the communities.

## **ISSUE: Communication - i.e. newspapers, radio, and television**

**BACKGROUND:** I feel it is imperative to have an established and efficient communication element. The local paper is never really consistent (Training Times) in reporting events or happenings. The paper comes out too infrequently. I don't mean events like "what's showing at the movies", especially for newcomers. They are accustomed to being informed on all events – cultural, good or bad news. The Training Times fails to inform the community of the good/bad ondis (??). The radio uses recorded announcements played after the fact. The Bavarian monthly is great for social events but not much for other. Hohenfels ITR – unable to go sometimes vs. Vilseck grounded. Winter trips vs. no winter trips.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Weekly Training Times. Daily current announcements, rather they are news or not. For instance, the storm alarm goes off in the middle of a bright sunny day, why? Or perhaps reactions from the community on "how to survive the winter". Tell us what is going on in the high school, middle school or elementary schools. Please just don't provide us with things to do, tell us how the community is enjoying the events. How are the FSGs surviving? Some of us will not get out there and make the community better if we don't know how the community is fairing. Equal ITRs for Hohenfels, Vilseck & Graf

**RESOLUTION: Frequency of publication: The Times is restricted to bi-weekly publication for several reasons, among them: staffing issues, agreements with the printer (Stars and Stripes), DA and U'R guidance and standard practice amongst other similar community publications.**

**Moving to a weekly publication schedule would require revamping all printing agreements and would represent a variation from standard practice among community newspapers of similar size and mandate. It would also entail adding staff, which at this time, and under current constraints, is not an option.**

**Daily announcements: Currently, the two BSBs issue news bulletins on an irregular basis. The ASG Public Affairs Office is already investigating options, including formalizing the news bulletin process and providing an ASG-wide weekly bulletin.**

**Misc: The PAO and the Times already offer a great deal of information about community events (news and feature stories, community calendar and news briefs), and we try to present fair and balanced coverage for all communities. With a staff of two, however, it is impossible to cover all events in all locations without assistance from the BSB PAOs and volunteers. We rely on contributions from representatives at the schools, tenant units and other organizations as well. We're always in the market for more input and for contributions from the community. We frequently publish contributed articles, news briefs and letters to the editor about community and command issues.**

**AFN is a command information entity with whom we coordinate closely, and AFN, indeed, faces many of the same challenges that we do.**

**The Bavarian-American has a different mandate (it is not an authorized DOD news publication, but is rather a MWR marketing media), and thus cannot be expected to provide any other information.**



**ISSUE: Phone bills**

**BACKGROUND:** Would like to have phone bills in English. It's too difficult and inconvenient to ask someone to translate. Why should we always get bills that we just have to pay because that's what the bottom line says?

**RECOMMENDATION:** Simply have a system where the bills come in English to military families. They know who we are by the way we sign up for the system.

**RESOLUTION:** Unfortunately, Deutsche Telekom does not offer phone bills in English. The Company's technology will not allow it. However, all customers can go to building 700, Room 47 in Vilseck and pick up a "Translation Paper" to see what the basic phone bill states (i.e. due date, phone charges, etc.)

**ISSUE: The times available to customers for self-return of furniture to the Furniture warehouse in Eschenbach**

BACKGROUND: I have a concern about the change in hours at the Furniture Warehouse in Eschenbach. Up until the New Year, they were open until 1500 Monday through Friday, closed German holidays and open American holidays. When I called there in mid-January to confirm they would be open on MLK day (January 20th), I was informed that they were now closed on American holidays as well. This makes it very difficult to return furniture you have to return yourself or conduct any other face-to-face business with this organization. Essentially you have to take time off of work to be there during their hours of operation. I have talked with COL Watsek, who used to be in charge of the warehouse and Mr. Ken Rheault who is currently in charge. I was told that there are actually more customer service hours now than before because they are now open at 0730. The difficulty is that the hours they are open necessitate the customer taking time off of work. Even if you are waiting there when they open at 0730, you cannot conduct your business and get back to your job at Graf or Vilseck before 0800. It is also my understanding that the furniture-lending program will eventually be phased out except for furniture Americans would not typically have, such as large 220 appliances and wardrobes. While this may well be the future, at present there are still many customers out there with furniture. I am requesting consideration for the ideas that at least one day a week the warehouse remains open until 1600 or 1700 hours. The bank and post office do this on Thursday, and it is a great help to their customers. It is not necessary to add more hours to the work schedule. It can be done as the bank does it: on Thursdays it opens an hour later and remains open an hour later. This would be a great improvement in customer service with no additional cost to the organization.

RECOMMENDATION: see background

**RESOLUTION: The Furniture Support Center Eschenbach is no longer on the operational control of the 100<sup>th</sup> ASG. However, at our request in February 2003, FSC Eschenbach agreed to establish their hours of operation as follows: 0730 – 1600, weekdays, closed on German holidays and open on American holidays.**

**ISSUE: Too many agencies on post are requiring special as opposed to General Power of Attorneys.**

**BACKGROUND:** This requirement stresses families, spouses and soldiers, because they don't know how many powers of attorney they may need before they deploy. They stress about trying to anticipate every need for a Special POA they may have to have before they deploy. The General POA has become basically useless. The legal center is over taxed trying to prepare 7-10 POAs for every soldier before he or she deploys. Why do the agencies really need the Special POAs? Are they just trying to be big brother for the soldier? Is that their job or even really necessary? Why isn't a General POA sufficient? Agencies that I know require Special POAs: ID Cards, DEERS, Transportation, AER, and Finance

**RECOMMENDATION:** Agencies review their requirements on why Special POA is required as opposed to General POAs. Determine if it is really necessary. Publish a cumulative list of agencies requiring Special POAs to servicing legal centers so they can be prepared to provide Special POAs, especially in a deployment situation.

**RESOLUTION:** **Forwarded to IMA level AFAP Conference, active issue**